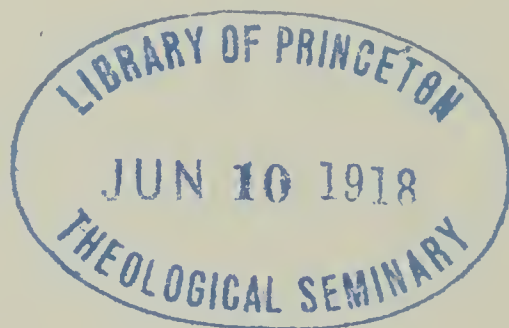


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PREFACE

I think that an apology should be made for permitting these sermons to appear in the press, as they were hurriedly written and not in any way intended for publication. Then too, they have received little revision or fitting preparation for the press, but are in the form they were delivered to a very small congregation. Therefore they will reveal looseness of style and lack of correct literary expression, but if only they possess enough spiritual quality to be of use in bringing somewhat of help and comfort to the troubled souls this day, or serve in any way to "bind up the broken-hearted," or point out, however imperfectly, God's purposes of love in this great sifting of the nations, the writer will be most richly rewarded.

C. F. W.

St. Paul's Rectory
All Soul's Day, 1917

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· SAVED AS BY FIRE

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I

TRIED BY FIRE

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall declare every man's work of what sort it is.

I COR. III: 11-15

WE must never forget what the Psalmist tells us that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness," that "He has made the round world so sure that it cannot be moved." It is important for us to remember this, for there are times when we might be tempted to think that it was more the Devil's world than God's, when as today the very mouth of Hell seems opened wide and all its power let loose. This might lead us to suppose that if the great enemy is in any bound, as we are told, he must have a long chain. But we must remember that all this is a part of God's discipline. He tries us "as silver is tried." This we know is true of life, we must pass through the fire, to have confidence in ourselves or our leaders. We never can know what it is to be a soldier, if we remain in barracks, it is only in the "battle's wild alarm" we can know what spirit we are of, whether we are men or poor, miserable,

despised shirkers, with no courage, no manhood, no loyalty, no fire in the blood, that would bid us live or die for truth and justice. It is the fire of battle that proves us and proves too our commanders. So God is constantly proving men and testing their faith. Testing it first in His Divine ruling, that He not only *made* the world but governs the world, this day and every day and that "the Most High ruleth over the kingdoms of men" "be the earth never so unquiet." We have the assurance that through all failures, shocks and catastrophes, through all "wars and rumors of wars," however terrible, the guiding hand of God is in and through them all, a Divine purpose is manifested—they all move like the majestic motion of the universe to "that Divine event to which the whole creation moves."

The second thought we must ever keep before us concerning this great foundation that has been laid (this immovable rock of God's providence in the world) is that His promises are unfailing, "for though heaven and earth pass away, His word must stand forever." He tells us "When ye hear of wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled for the end is not yet, in your patience possess ye your souls." However sin may abound, He tells us grace, that is, the power of God's favor and goodness does much more abound. If this be so, we see there can be no such thing as calamity in its true sense. There must be always an element of good in everything that God permits, or else it could not be His act and He is able to

make "the wrath of man turn to His praise" and bring good out of evil. Sin, He assures us, shall "not have the dominion" "nor shall the gates of hell prevail." This then is our foundation, other than which no man can lay, God's great purpose for the world must be fulfilled, for God is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. Everything, therefore, must proceed irresistibly to a divine event, the one great purpose of God for man, for God cannot fail in His work and will surely bring it to pass, were a hundred kaisers arrayed against Him, with the Devil himself in chief command. But we must remember the warning of Christ, "The end is not yet." God will not "hasten His work," He will not cause peace and truth and righteousness and love and brotherhood remain upon the earth till the world is ready to receive it. How can we in all reason have Heaven where Hell is rampant? So how can there be love and brotherhood, where men and women bite and devour one another? Where every strategy of hell is employed to crush and destroy those who ought to be our brothers? Thus we see though the foundation has been laid by the hands of the great Master Builder, and although it is a foundation that cannot be moved, and although the great temple of His Church built thereupon must reach its glorious completion; yet the materials must first be proved, tested by the Architect. They must be "tried stones" without fault or blemish, "meet for the Master's use." Here we

come to the most significant fact of our whole life, a fact that we should keep continually before us, that although both the founder and builder of the Church in the world, is God and can only be God, yet it is His fixed and unalterable law and principle of action, that He will do nothing for man except *through man*. So though God is both the architect and the builder of the structure, yet men as His fellow laborers are to do the work. We see the manifest necessity of this, since the structure is not one of wood or stone, but of human lives. It is a supreme structure, it is the labor of our own hands, of our wills and purposes, it is in very fact *ourselves*. God is ever present to help us, but He will not work alone, work is laid upon all men by a primal law, written by the hand of God. We find it on the very first page of our history, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread"—no man in any condition of his life is exempt from this law, or as our text says, "every man is to be tried by fire," that is, in the heat of action, for there are no idlers in the Lord's vineyard. Therefore, we see that every Christian belongs to the working class, he is to be proved by labor. "If a man will not work, let him not eat," says St. Paul.

"No man has a right to sit down to the feast of life without paying the reckoning." It must be work of head or hand or heart, but it must be labor of diligence, such as entails sacrifice, for it is written on the bond, in that the nature of the work was such as to produce the sweat of the face.

It was no mere perfunctory labor, of nerveless duty, but an earnest, ceaseless striving. As the great Edison has said "great achievement is one per cent genius and ninety-nine per cent sweat." We must remember that manual labor is not the only nor is it the most exhausting kind of labor, the works of mind or heart, are more serious in their demands on our energies. The commander-in-chief who sits at headquarters, far from the scene of battle, but planning and directing every movement, is consuming his energies more than the brave men at the front, that are facing the enemy point by point, and enduring the shock of battle. So, too, the captain who stands on the bridge during the peril of the storm, directing the course of the ship, is giving out more of himself than the sailor, who far aloft risks his life to reef the ship.

But whatever our labor may be, whether of head or hand or heart, it must be one of sacrifice. No real work can be done without it, for it is only in the willingness to sacrifice that the spirit of our work can be seen, that it is true and real, that it is a work of the heart and mind, a thing in truth, that we not only live for but are willing to die for,—as the Apostle says, "the fire shall try every man's work of what manner it is." But we must remember that sacrifice means strictly something given or offered to God, it should always be a personal recognition that we are conscious of being God's workmen and fellow laborers with Him.

So we see that it is not how *much* we do, as *how* we do it that is so important, it is the purpose of our act that makes it good or evil. This is clear, for it is quite possible that we build our house on the sand of perishable material of which the Apostle speaks "the wood, hay, and stubble" of things that pass away. We have only to look out into the world to see a self-sacrifice amounting almost to a sort of heroism, by those who have set themselves out like Cain of old to "build themselves a name" upon the earth by piling up money and building a fortune. From youth to old age they subject themselves to the most rigid economy and unceasing labor. Often they will shut themselves out from all the pleasures and recreations of life, intent only on the heaping up of money that they cannot really possess. They will do all this for a thing that cannot profit them and compel them to die as spiritual bankrupts and beggars for eternity. How necessary then is this warning of the Apostle about the "wood, hay and stubble!" The wide spread love of gain is one of the most prevailing evils of our day, and it is one of the most ignoble of passions, for it tends to crush out the most ennobling instincts of men; it is, in truth, the sin of Judas, who took his price to betray his Master. The sin of Judas was that he was an inordinately greedy man, even as the grafters of our day, that would enrich themselves at the expense of our country, or indeed the safety and welfare of the heroes that are fighting our battles today and

giving their lives that these same scabs of earth may live.

Human speech fails when we would speak of the depth of their degradation and the hopeless pit of evil into which they have fallen. There would seem to be no hope for such men. We must ever remember that the man who lives for himself dies and takes his stand among the beasts that perish. He is a blot on the face of God's creation and he will be consumed in the fire that his own hands have built.

While the man who is filled with the true spirit of sacrifice is fitted to survive all trials and difficulties, to meet all dangers, aye, to meet even death itself with a smiling face. Who can look out over the battlefields today and not thank God for what we are permitted to behold? For think of the glorious record of courage, loyalty, and of faithfulness unto death, of our heroes of Ypres, Langemarck, of Festhubert, and Vimy Ridge, who "loved not their lives unto death," and offered the glorious sacrifice of their life blood for home, King and country, and have made the name of Canada a praise in the earth. They have consecrated the land of their birth, and we may say have fertilized the whole future of our history by the richness of their offering.

Ah, my friends, these are the golden spots in our history that never will grow dim. These are the things that make angels rejoice, they have been tried in the fire and they have proved themselves pure gold. Men that are willing to live

and die for something more enduring than the "wood, hay, and stubble" of the things of time. They may not have had gold in their pockets, but they had the love of truth and justice in their hearts. They were fellow workers with God and died like men and have won their crown. We talk and hear a good deal of success and "making good," but who that believes in God could picture a greater or more glorious success than this? These noble souls have done more for the true glory of Canada, and for the future establishment of their native land than if our millionaires had been multiplied a thousand fold, kings may sit high, but no man sits higher or on a mightier throne than he who is privileged to die for his country, and no crown is so bright as the crown of him who gives his life for men. They have shed a glory on the name of Canada that shall never die while men are found to write her history, for whatever her future history may be, it cannot be denied that *once* she was glorious, through the dauntless deeds of her sons. Nor is the glory of their bravery only in the past or present, for it will be a future glory; for as a people, this vast struggle not only has opened the pockets of our people to support this great struggle for freedom and truth, but it has opened their eyes and hearts to the vital importance of these things, and so to see that there are some things more precious than gold and silver, more noble than mere eating and drinking, more honorable than sloth and ease. The influence of this discipline must re-

veal itself, in the future history of our people and nation. Indeed, this war will leave the whole world different from what it found it. It has come as a mighty spur to our best energies and noblest qualities, it has fired our loyalty, deepened our love of our people and nation, widened our sympathy and sense of brotherhood, and has done much to draw men to closer union and fellowship. It has a sobering and correcting influence upon that reckless spirit of indifference, seen in our gay and frivolous, pleasure seeking, mammon-worshipping age, and must profoundly influence the destiny and welfare of the whole world.

The war came like a bolt from the blue on the motherland, torn by strikes, discord and strife of party and danger of civil war. Every man's hand seemed turned against his brother; but at the first rattle of the sword, turmoil ceased, disunion ended. The high and the low, the rich and the poor, the prince and the plebeian, arose as one man to meet the foe, to stand shoulder to shoulder against the inhuman barbarism that would leave the trail of its infamy in our peaceful borders and crush out our liberties by the iron heel of its insolent might. We never must forget that all the ideals that we cherish as a people and nation, rest upon the foundation of liberty, we are this day fighting our very existence as a free people. The rule of Germany would strike out the light of freedom from the earth, bring us to the level of the savage. Peace will come in God's good

time, but if it is "not yet" as Christ warns us we must learn that we still have to be proved by fire, but there can be no staying till victory is ours, for our cause is the cause of humanity. But we may rest assured that those who are fighting or who are about to fight are God's noblemen, His chosen knights of renown. They must look upon themselves as His fellow laborers, consecrated to do a holy work and offer a real sacrifice, it may be of life itself that truth may remain upon the earth, that love and brotherhood may still bind human souls in a fellowship Divine. So we say this day, "All hail to our brave men who are so highly privileged as to stand in the rank and file of the noble defenders of our country! May the panoply of God be their protection and give them faith and courage to be His soldiers tried and true!" And God grant that those of us who may be alive to see the end of this dread struggle, may see a Christian nation conscious of its past shortcomings and resolute and determined to enter on the new life of a people that fears God, abhors evil, and reaches forward to a life consecrated to fellowship with God and devoted to the furtherance of the brotherhood of the race.

II

THE DAYS ARE EVIL

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

EPH. V: 15-16

IF it could ever be said in the history of the Christian world, that the days are evil, it surely can be said today. Everywhere we hear that the gates of Hell are opened, and the most depraved passions of men are employed to do their evil work. The heart sickens when it attempts to picture the awful harvest of this world-wide butchery and of the terrible aftermath of misery and wretchedness that must follow, as the inevitable result of this chaos of destruction. We see the cream of the nation's manhood snatched from our midst, we see widowed homes and fatherless children, we see, too, crippled industries and wasted treasure. Then, looking to the scene of battle, we see the hopeless destruction of town and country, the devastated fields, the cities laid waste, the nameless sufferings, the cruel indignities of the people, driven from home and fatherland subjected to the ruthless barbarity of worse than heathen war lords.

Then surely to our eyes, "the days are evil," but we must never forget that God rules and that

He has not left the world to take care of itself. We must ever keep in mind those grand words of the Psalmist, we have never had so much need to remember them as today—that “the Lord is King,” that “He sitteth between the cherubim, be the earth never so unquiet.” He works out His mysteries in His own way. Though “Heaven and earth shall pass away, His word must be fulfilled.” His purpose is the only thing that cannot fail. Hence it comes that in the history of the world, and in human life, it must be absolutely and definitely true that nothing comes by chance, a sparrow cannot fall to the ground outside God’s purpose, or without the Father’s knowledge.

But we must remember that the evil that is in the world, is not His making but man’s. God has endued man with the awful power and responsibility of a free will, he can choose good or evil, his life depends on the exercise of this free will. If he wishes to do evil, God permits him to do so, to his utter loss and confusion. He makes sin its own avenger, and bring its own punishment and so reveals to man not only the sin but the folly of disobedience to God’s law. Thus it is that “He maketh the wrath of man turn to His own glory” and brings good out of evil.

There can be nothing without a cause, and like begets like. If there is evil in the world, we may be sure that it is because man has sinned, which has called for God’s judgment, not merely for the retributive punishment of sin, but for the re-

demption of the race. Sin must always bring its own revenge, and prove, in the end, a curse to any people, and must be in itself destructive, since it is the rejection of God's law, which is the law of the universe.

Hence it is, when the days are evil, and sin has the dominion we learn, thereby that God's laws have been transgressed, and that God is working out His remedy by making sin its own taskmaster, and making it bind the workers with its own chains, weighing them down with the burdens that they themselves have made, scourging them with the whips of their own making.

God is ever pleading with His people that they may turn to Him and live, that they may walk as wise men and not as fools. He gives them earthly blessings, fills their barns with plenty, and makes "their presses burst out with new wine," or—in the language of our day—He makes industries flourish, wealth increase, business boom, trade develop; till the world is our market place. With what result? Lo, our wealth has become our poverty. God has spoken to us in our prosperity, but we did not hear.

Yes, we do not hear. This has been the great sin of the world this day, for we must face the bitter truth that the more we get, the less we give; for our "heart goes after our coveteousness." Instead of being the worshippers of God, we become worshippers of mammon, and practically say to the things which our own hands have made "ye are our gods." So the things of time and

sense become our masters, and the whole earth becomes reeking with the pestilence of materialism and therefore tottering to its fall.

But God's mercy "is over all His people," He does not leave them alone in their sin. They have rejected His mercy in the day of their prosperity, so in His great love, the day of adversity comes. God pleads once again with His people, but it is with fire and sword that they may learn righteousness through His judgments, if not through His blessings. As God says through the mouth of His prophet Isaiah, "For behold I will come with fire and with chariots like a whirlwind, to render my anger with fury, and my rebuke with flames of fire; for by sword and fire will the Lord plead with all flesh and the slain of the Lord shall be many."

Hence it is that this present evil day has come upon us, and our foes as He foretold, they are of "our own household." Yes, it is the voice of God that we hear this day pleading with His people, saying "why will ye die, Oh House of Israel, and not turn to me and live?" But it is in mercy He pleads, not in anger; He is speaking in the words of Christ. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and if thy foot offend thee cut it off; for it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two feet to be cast into Hell."

So though the days may appear to us as evil, yet these are days pregnant with mercy to the whole world. Germany, in the very midst of her pride and arrogance and ruthless barbarity,

though going to her destruction because of her sin of the idolatry of human might, is only an instrument in the hands of God, working out His purposes for man. For "God fulfills Himself in many ways" that are unseen by man, and His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. His mysteries are beyond human thought, but they are surely safe in His hands, and our wisdom is seen in *leaving them there* for we may be assured that "He doeth all things well."

We are living in what we may call a grave crisis in human affairs, we have come to a most momentous epoch in the world's history, when God is opening doors in almost every corner of the earth to the entrance of those who would do His work. The ancient heathen religions are being, one after another, wholly discredited. The great Moslem power, has largely heard its death knell through this war, while the great kingdoms, India, China and Japan (as also darkest Africa)—are like sheep without a shepherd, and are all calling to us, "come over and help us." And this cry, we may say, comes to us of today with especial significance, since it was the cry of that very country of Macedonia, which at the present time is in the possession of British troops.

Thus the great question of missions is thrusting itself more and more before the eyes of the Christian world, it is realized, that if we would save ourselves, we must endeavor to save others, for "he who loveth not his brother abideth in death."

How can we love our brother, if we deny him the blessing of Christian light and knowledge? Indeed, we have no choice in the matter, for Christ has said "all the world," and into all the world we must go, if we would be His disciples. We can never call ourselves a Christian nation, in true sense, till we make the cause of missions, the one great activity of our people.

We believe that this is one of the great things that God is preparing the world for through this great war, first through its unifying influences in establishing the brotherhood of the race, and by bringing men from the ends of the earth to fight and if need be, to die together for one common cause. The struggle, too, has been so fierce, so terrible, so deadly, that it has put a most severe test on the moral qualities of the men and officers and has so appealed to their heroism that it has strengthened their noblest qualities. We may thank God that the appeal has not been in vain. Never in all history has such a spirit of seriousness so pervaded an armed host, every man, we may say, seems conscious that he is fighting for a holy cause that demanded his unshrinking fidelity and the cheerful performance of whatsoever he might be called upon to bear. Nay, further, the offering of the supreme sacrifice of life itself, seems in many cases to have been their highest joy. Indeed, the steadfast valor and heroism, under all possible conditions of the men who are fighting our battles, have been the wonder of the world.

The sacredness of our cause has another proof

from the widely spread conviction felt by the troops that they were not fighting alone, but that the warriors of an unseen host were fighting by their side. This may tell us that they were conscious that they were fighting the Lord's battle.

It is surely of the deepest significance that the spontaneous consent of men decided that every resting place, should be signed with the sign of the cross, and may we not hope that Christian people will follow their example and remove heathen symbolism from their graves. Think of the millions that have worn this sacred symbol upon their breasts when they went forth to battle. How fitting then, that this same sign should mark their resting place, since they like their Master have died for men and for the welfare and redemption of the world.

So we may say, that the influence of this vast struggle, has tended largely to deepen the spiritual sensibilities of men, for it has brought them face to face with the stern issues of life. It has awakened men and women from the fatal sleep of indifference and mere bodily indulgence. Such surely can be in no sense "redeeming the time" (as the apostle would bid us) but they are wasting the precious hours to their own destruction, they are preparing themselves for an "evil day" that will surely come upon them.

Let, then these terrible object lessons that are being presented to us each day, serve to open our eyes to the real things, to the things that count to ourselves and to the world. Let us see

to it that all the heroism and devotion and spirit of sacrifice for these same real things, are not reserved to those who are fighting our battles for the freedom of the world in this present evil day.

Let not the precious blood of our sons that has been shed for us and for the world, be shed in vain, but that we too will join in this upward movement of the race, and resolve to do our part, if not at the front, at the base. For these are the days of sacrifice, the man who refuses to do "his bit" on the field, is called a "slacker" and he rightly meets with our contempt and we despise him from our very hearts. Who then can measure the disgrace and humiliation of the spiritual slackers? Those who are afraid to meet their spiritual foes and refuse to put on their spiritual armor, who are satisfied with being mere camp followers in the Christian army, but are prepared for no sacrifice, willing to share in the spoils of the battle field, on which others have given their lives, but too cowardly to fight, or to offer anything in sacrifice for God—such surely must be eternal slackers, who will receive swift judgment from the Lord of battles.

Oh, then, while we have opportunity, let us redeem the time that is given to us, and walk as wise men for "the days are evil."

THE GREAT CHALLENGE

And God called unto Adam and said, "Where art thou?"

GEN. III, 9

IN the infancy of our race, when sin first entered into the world, through the disobedience of our first parents, we are told that Adam strove to hide himself" in the trees of the garden." This was but a picture, a vivid type and symbol of something in the desire of man, that would ever be impossible,—to blot out through our own effort the results of sin; for sin, is its own avenger. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" and this by an unchangeable law; for sin is an alien in God's world, it is a discord in the harmony of His order. In its final result, it must be as a jarring note would be in the harmony of the universe, it must lead to chaos and destruction. This is because the effects of sin become a part of our very nature, woven into the texture of our being, as the warp and woof of our thoughts, words and deeds, and help to mould all our efforts, ambitions and desires. They are, indeed, a part of our very being. We can no more separate ourselves from our sins, nor the remembrance of them, than we can separate ourselves from our shadows. Yet how men ever since Adam's day, have been at-

tempting to do this impossible thing! That, too, in the self same way,—“in the trees of the garden,” that is, by endeavoring to surround themselves with the things of this present world,—to have their ears so dulled with the din and noise of things seen and temporal, their hearts so overcharged with “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life” that they cannot hear the voice of God saying to them, day by day, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” We must never forget that nothing just happens in God’s world, everything to the insect’s wing, to the numbering the hairs of our head or the sparrow’s fall, has a Divine purpose.

Hence we see that events of our life are as monitors of God, hints and foreshadowings of things that must be hereafter, they are all tokens of God’s deep love and concern for His children. Sometimes God speaks to us in the still, small voice, of health and prosperity, of quiet hours, of peaceful homes, of fruitful fields, of thriving industries, and well-filled treasuries. Then again, when hearts become cold, and sin has the dominion, then do “His judgments appear on the earth;” mighty winds “rend the mountains and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord,” floods and cyclones and earthquakes sweep over the earth without a moment’s warning leaving death and destruction in their ruinous pathway. These, as well as the still, small voice of our ease and comfort and prosperity, of our quiet nights and peaceful days, are equally the voice of God.

They are foreshadowings of eternal things, of judgments saying to us as He did unto Adam, "Where art thou?"

These terrible visitations, however, are not signs of God's anger towards His children, but testimonies of His love. As we are told, "whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." In no way could His want of Love be more clearly seen than by permitting men to continue in sin and so allow the world to get more and more the dominion over them, till "the things belonging to their peace should be hidden from their eyes." So it is that along the road of life, God puts up His sign-posts saying, "this is not your rest."

We must never forget, that love and discipline, go hand in hand; love without discipline is mere selfish sentimentality; while discipline, is the very basis of character and of moral virtue. The son or the daughter, that knows not how to obey, will be the child of many sorrows, and often bring down the gray hairs of their parents with sorrow to the grave. And this for the simple reason that he who knows not how to obey, does not know what obedience is and therefore cannot govern himself. Thus he is the poor slave of his own will and evil desire. "What son is there," the apostle asks, "whom his father chasteneth not?" "Now no chastening, for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, yet afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that have been exercised thereby." So he

tells us that "God chasteneth us for our profit that we may be partakers of His holiness."

We believe that the looseness, frivolity, spiritual indifference, and lack of moral fibre, which are so characteristic of the youth of our day, are largely due to the lack of discipline in the household, and the absence of parental authority. If ever the apostolic injunction of "children obey your parents," needs to be enjoined it is today. But let us not fail to mark that this serious evil is more the fault of the parent than of the child, it has its foundation in the lack of moral courage in the parent and his indifference to sin. It takes its cue from that spiritual sloth and enervated softness which also are characteristic of our day, which attempts to hide itself under the spurious name of love, and which produce so much of the mawkish sentimentality of our time. We must realize more and more, that it is only through much tribulation that we can enter into the kingdom of God, and therefore without discipline we are dead, because we are the slaves of our own will. Hence it is, that we need to be continually roused and warned; yes, sometimes bruised and broken, by the events of our life, that our eyes may be opened to see our dangers.

Thus it is today, as we turn our thoughts to the bloody fields of Europe, hear the thundering boom of cannon, the trampling of the mighty host, see the awful carnage, the rivers of blood, the windrows of the slain, we hear the voice of God, speaking to us as He did to Elijah in the

wilderness, or as He did to Adam in the trees of the garden. Yes, in trumpet tones He is speaking to us in this awful war. He is not only speaking to Germany, stamping on her this worse than barbaric slaughter, but He is speaking to us, to the nations of Europe, yes, to the whole world He is summoning them before the bar of His just judgment to consider their ways. He is saying to them what He said to Adam, "Where art thou?" He speaks to us through this storm of passion, this riot of destruction, this wild conflict of human wills, even as He speaks in the cyclone's wrath and the earthquake's destruction. We must remember that God has given to us the fateful gift of freedom of will, the power to do good or evil in our little sphere. But though He does not dethrone our wills, He does not abdicate His power over them, nor us. We may disobey Him, as Adam, and destroy ourselves; but we cannot defeat His purpose. He overrules, even our evil doing to His own ends. We would attempt, as the world has done, to overthrow evil by evil; but He would overthrow it by good, and turns evil to His own glory for the "Lord is king, be the people never so impatient, He sitteth between the cherubim, be the earth never so unquiet."

What, then, is God saying to us in this dread catastrophe? First, He is showing to us and to the world, as it has never been witnessed before in all man's history, the madness, the horrible cruelty, and the unmeasured wickedness of war in general but especially between Christian na-

tions. He is making us see what we are so often told today, that "war is hell" and therefore never can be of His ordering. He may and does permit it because of man's sin, but He can never order it, it never can be in accordance with His will, for "He is not the author of confusion, but of peace." War is always the result of man's sin, of human pride and selfishness.

It is true that under present conditions, it is sometimes necessary and right for even a Christian nation, in its own defence or in the defence of others, to take the sword in hand when their rights and liberties have been rudely overthrown and trampled under foot by the tyranny of a stronger power. But there is a wide gulf fixed by God, between the war of human wrath and that of righteous indignation. We are commanded of St. Paul "to bear not the sword in vain," and His counsel is "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." War is not always the expression of anger, it is often the self-sacrificing desire for peace and order. So today, had England refused to imperil the nation by remaining neutral in this present war, had she permitted the iron heel of Prussian cruelty to stamp out the liberty of heroic Belgium, she most surely would have played the part of a poltroon and a coward, and would no longer be able to lift up her head as leader amongst Christian nations. Never in her history could she so clearly claim that her cause was just, never could she more confidently feel, humanly speak-

ing, that her "battle was the *Lord's*." We believe that the priceless sacrifice that she has so freely poured out in this great struggle, will be as an atonement for her many sins and the sins of her people; that the blessing of God will descend upon her because of this noble sacrifice for truth and righteousness, and that she will arise from this "agony and bloody sweat" a renewed and restored people. The scriptures must be fulfilled and so we must not forget the warning of Christ that He "came not to send peace but a sword." This most surely shows us that the sword must come before peace, the sword must cut away the false before the true can be revealed. To give liberty to the oppressed, help to the fallen, rescue to the crushed and down-trodden, as well as retribution to the tyrant and the oppressor,—all this becomes a Christian duty even though it is maintained by the sword.

"Be ye angry and sin not" is the apostle's summary of Christian teaching. We see, therefore, that there is an anger that is not sinful but virtuous. When Christ condemns him who is "angry with his brother without a cause," He clearly implies the truth that one may have good cause for anger against his brother. Indeed, we cannot but think of His own anger in the temple courts as He drove from the sacred place the sacrilegious mob that would profane the holy House. He drove them out like hunted swine with the besom of His wrath. War then, we see, may have its altogether sacred side. It is the

scourge of God, and His rebuke of sin, it is the forecast of His final rebuke at the day of judgment. There we must all appear, we must all hear His voice as Adam did at the cool of the day,—at the ending of our life, when He will say to us also, “Where art thou? Give an account of thy stewardship for thou mayest be no longer steward.”

IV

THE WAR AND ITS NEEDS AND PURPOSES

THE DAY OF INTERCESSION

The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient, He sitteth between the Cherubim be the earth never so unquiet.

PSALM XCIX, I

THE purpose of this Day of Intercession is expressed by *The Times*:

Another year is drawing to its close under the shadow of war; and today the King, the Head of the Church and the Defender of the Faith, summons his people throughout the world to set aside the first Sunday in the coming year as a special day of prayer and thanksgiving—prayer “that we may have the clear sightedness” and “strength necessary to the victory of our cause,” and thanksgiving “for the Divine guidance which has led us so far towards our goal.” Amid the clash of arms and the daily insistence of material or mechanical tasks, it is not always easy to remember that we are banded together to establish, with brain or muscle or life, the cause which to all of us is the noblest of all causes. In the knowledge that all his loyal subjects have faith in the justice of that cause the King bids us to recall, with the solemnity of a day set apart the ideals which we are striving to uphold. If the call comes at a time when we cannot fail to remember that the mills of God grind slowly, it comes also at a time when we Englishmen and all those united with us in a common service, were never more conscious of our strength or of the rightness of the endeavor in which it is being used to the utmost. Thankful, therefore, for the height of our calling, and that our women

and children have been spared the full horrors of war, we may humbly renew our strength and welcome the King's command:

“England, on thy knees tonight
Pray that God defend the right.”

We as members of God's Church are gathered together here this day, for prayer and supplication to the Ruler of the earth and the great Arbiter of the nations, in a supreme crisis of our history.

Never before in the history of our people has the peace and the material welfare of our race been so seriously threatened. That reign of peace which the English speaking world fondly hoped for and labored, has been cruelly dashed to the earth, by hands that are red with blood. Yes, the ruler of the German people stands before the world this day as the representative of a nation that has brought the deepest reproach that has ever rested upon the Christian world, and has proved itself unworthy of the name of Christian. Her haughty ruler, though he has not scrupled to take the name of the God of love upon his lips, has had war in his heart, and has wilfully and wantonly taken upon himself the responsibility of the wholesale slaughter of his fellow Christians, establishing hell upon earth. But God be praised he can at worst kill only the body, he cannot snatch from that martyred Host the unseen medal of the cross which lies upon the breast of him who dies for truth and justice and offers his blood as sacrifice on the altar of his country and the welfare of the land that gave him birth. For the God of battles, before whose eyes

not a sparrow falls unseen shall surely note with joy the fall of him who dies that the tyrant may be vanquished and liberty and truth may remain upon the earth. Yes, those fair dreams of peace which so gladdened our hearts, and filled us with hope for the welfare of the world and led many optimists to think that a general war amongst Christian nations in our present state of enlightenment was simply impossible, have been rudely dispelled, the labors of our statesmen to preserve the peace of Europe have proved unsuccessful and we have been drawn into a struggle which we have provoked in no way and from which we seek no personal gain. A military despotism, similar to that of Napoleon has once more (we believe for the last time) been revived in Europe and has been advanced by methods of cruelty and tyranny which have long since been discarded amongst civilized peoples. In this unprovoked aggression and in an unsought quarrel, England for the cause of peace, justice, and liberty, for the sanctity of most solemn pledges given between nation and nation, has thrown herself into the most terrible struggle of her history, both by sea and land. Indeed we know that the whole continent of Europe is one vast battlefield, empurpled with the blood of millions slain as the price of a tyrant lust that would be gratified, so the hope of peace had for the present vanished, and the progress of the world gone ten degrees backward. Yes, you may be ready to say that is all true, but if the question of your

text be true, why is all this? If the God of the sparrows is our God and if He still "sitteth between the Cherubim, be the earth never so unquiet," why has this blessing of peace which the world so sorely needs, been denied? Why has He permitted it to be dashed to the earth by unholy hands? Why this cruel carnage? Why these awful windrows of death? Why the untold sufferings of the wounded, and the tears of the widow and the orphan? In short, why this terrible baptism of blood, and death of the world's peace? The answer is, "because the world was not ready for peace." It has not yet been taught the need for righteousness, and the utter barbarism of war. Let us not think that it is the German of only that has sinned, let us not point the finger scorn only at him for this war. We too must veil our faces and hang our heads in shame and say "our sins have taken such hold upon us that we are not able to look up," both we in Canada and those of our blood in the motherland have given ourselves over "to the lusts of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life." We had well-nigh forgotten" the Lord our God who had done such great things for us." For previous to the war it was an age of feverish instability and unrest and disquietude. The political life in the motherland had become a hopeless muddle of incapacity, a seething chaos of party strife, which made effectual government a farce and a byword. The law of the land seemed powerless to punish or restrain deeds of violence and wholesale destruc-

tion of most valuable property and beautiful works of art, the priceless treasures of the nation, even the sacred monuments of the peoples' devotion, the venerable Churches of the land, were not safe from destruction by the hatchet or bomb in the hand of a crazy mob of fanatical women, who not only confessed their crime, but gloried in it. Yet the law of England seemed "as a lamb led to the slaughter" to this foe that had arisen in their midst, and the whole land was terrorized by criminals that a sane justice would have kept behind prison walls. Nor was it in dealing with factious, silly women only that the might and majesty and old time justice of British rule and government, seemed weak and vacillating and wanting in its ancient dignity, for it was seen also in its manifest injustice and its desire to pander to popular prejudice in despoiling the Church in Wales of its sacred heritage and by its shilly-shally, uncertain policy, fomenting religious strife in Ireland, which nothing but a common danger allayed and only a foe at our gates prevented from ending in civil war.

Nor was it only here that England had sinned—in which we too have our share—for with her as with us, an insane hunger for the great things of the earth ruled the hour, since all around us were men, whose loftiest ambition seemed centered on wringing out of this world, its pleasures and its honors and its riches. Social unrest was wide-spread, the strife between capital and labor was ever existing, millions were crying for bread,

while millions were feasting and ruining their souls through indolence, luxury and ease. The very foundations of the Christian faith were confidently questioned, and a science falsely so-called had deceived many, revealing to us how little after all the so-called culture and refinement and the manifold discoveries and material progress of this wonderful age can, in themselves, do for the elevation of the race. Sin still stalked triumphant. Lust, crime and moral degradation reared their heads with amazing insolence. The old time respect for law, order and the sterner virtues, which at one time were the marked characteristics of the English people, were wanting. The Esaus were abundant, willing to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, even sport had become mercenary, and had lost its virility. Men grasped at luxury and ease, and spurned the sterner virtues of manly endurance. So the whole life of the people had become lax and enervated for they were losing sight of lofty ideals and reverence for truth and God and His service. They were, in truth, endeavoring to live without Him and the knowledge of His ways.

Since this is we believe, a true record of our life at this time, of which we have spoken, if "God still sitteth between the Cherubim," can we wonder that His wrath is abroad this day? And here let us mark that in this evidence of God's chastening hand, that history is repeating herself, in that His people of old were brought to a similar condition. They too had forgotten

God their Saviour and had turned to Egypt, that is, to military organization to defend them, till as today, "their enemies set in upon them like a flood" even till "there were no widows to make lamentation." When they came, we are told, with our question today on their lips "why is this evil come upon us?" God answers them in terms exact, "Because ye have robbed me, this whole congregation." So we too have robbed God, not only in tithes and offerings but in the honor due unto His Holy Name. Robbed Him through our coldness and luxury and ease and indifference; through our failure to realize our responsibilities to the great heathen world, who are this day looking on our deep shame and humiliation and asking in wondering amazement, is this all that Christianity can do? Is this how Christians love one another? Surely, this day is a day that calls for our intercession to the God of battles, that He would be pleased to crush oppression, give liberty to the slaves of imperial power, that He would subdue the arrogant and humble the proud, who put their trust in "the spear and the shield," in dreadnaughts and machine guns. But we must go further this day and pray that God would have mercy upon our own sins. The sin of this war does not, thank God, lie at our door, though we through our wilful sin have been, in part, responsible for it; so its lesson is needed for us as well as the Germans. It is a call to us to mend our ways, for in spite of former chastisements, notably the Boer war,

we had grown careless and indifferent. As a people, we were fast becoming the Godless nation that were trying to live without God in the world. Therefore this evil has come upon us and the wrath of God is abroad in the land. Whether we like it or not, we must face stern facts. We are in death grips with a relentless foe that will fight to the last gasp. Let us not fail to remember that Britain's life is ours, and when she dies, we die.

Let us remember that each one of us has his or her duty to perform as a contributor to the nation's well being. A calamity such as this which is now hanging over us, is a call to every single soul to do its share for the nation's victory. May we and our mother land and our noble allies, combine to form a serious, sober, God-fearing, reverent nation, whose watch-word is duty, and whose banner is truth. Let us banish our political puerilities and childish bickerings, as well as our shameless indulgences!

England calls to us, the world calls to us and, above all, God calls to us to be *men*, to be on the side of truth, integrity and honor. May God preserve the right! Should we then not lift up our hearts this day? Yes, lift them up to the Great Lord of battles, for the occasion has no parallel in the history of the world. Never has the call to prayer rung out so clear, so wide, so imperative as today. The great Church of our mother land is on her knees, daily prayer and daily Eucharist is the rule in many of her churches.

The quiet hush of the spirit of prayer is the prevailing note of her people.

So we come before Him today to pray for our king and our statesmen and our soldiers and sailors and our noble band of nurses, those Red Cross heroines who have gone with the ministry of mercy in their hands. But let us continually lift up our prayers for our brave volunteers, both the fighting and the fallen, who have gone forth on this blessed crusade, and have pledged their faith to fight for home and country. May God give them His strength and protection to fight the good fight that may win for them the Crown of Glory that fadeth not away. *Amen.*

V

THE KING'S BUSINESS

The king's business requireth haste.

I SAMUEL XXI, 8

THE sword of the Lord and of Gideon" was the great battle cry of that consecrated host who went out, under the leadership of Gideon, to fight against the uncircumcized host of Midian, the old time enemies of the Kingdom of God, who suffered, we are told, a most inglorious defeat, and were utterly wasted.

This, we believe, was but a type and a foreshadowing for all time of the final overthrow of God's enemies and the final establishment of His kingdom in the world. Therefore, have no shadow of doubt, that those fell powers that have bound themselves under an oath to rob humanity of its life, by which we mean the principles of truth and liberty, freedom and brotherhood, must be through God's help crushed and overthrown this day.

So "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," is once again the slogan of a consecrated host. Yes, those of our own blood, those loyal sons of ours, who have gone forth from their comfortable homes, to endure untold privations, to face unmoved all the powers of hell for the love of home and king and country, these men are most surely

worthy the highest honor, and are in truth King's men, and if they are not fighting for the King's business, then it is nowhere to be found. For if we are in any sense Christian people, we must acknowledge that the great business set before the Christian world this day, is to build up the kingdom of God in the world. We may say that never since the world began, was there such a splendid opportunity; for from east to west, from north to south, the cry goes up, "come over and help us." We see a wide open door in every land, the ancient cults are languishing as things of the past. There is a general awakening in heathen lands, civil, social and educational. As with St. Paul of old, scales have fallen from the eyes of the countless millions of the East. They are having new visions. They are desiring new things, and, above all, they are beginning to learn of Christ. They are looking forward to us to "expound unto them the way of God more perfectly."

All this was seen and known of all men, yet what was the action of the Christian Church previous to this war? Did it act as if it was the King's business to be done above all things and at every cost? No, surely the very best they did was to make it "a side show" and *not* their business. They let their hands hang down, they hugged their gold and kept back their sons from the ministry, so allowed this vast opportunity to pass by.

This we believe to be the colossal sin of our

time, like Ananias and Sapphira we have lied to God, we have called ourselves Christians and have kept back the price of being Christians, we have absolutely failed to recognize the solemnity of the King's command to go into all the world, that this call of God was and must be, the great business of the Church, the very pledge of her existence. We have called ourselves soldiers of the King and have proved traitors to His cause.

This we may believe is the great sin for which we are being called into judgment this day. We have, as we have said, "kept back part of the price" by robbing God and now God is making us pay a hundredfold, by our gold and the untold sacrifices of our choicest sons.

In the pouring out of these sacrifices, we believe that God has awakened the whole world to an intense seriousness, has lifted the whole race to loftier ideals and to the nobility of sacrifice, of living, or, if need be, dying for a great cause. Selfishness has ever been the world's greatest curse, but one of the great features of this terrible war has been self-sacrifice, the forgetting of self, it has developed in a marked degree love for others, it has inspired men to the loftiest heroism, the most unswerving devotion to the welfare of men and the willingness to die that men may be free, and that truth and righteousness may remain upon the earth.

Who can tell the effect of this great awakening? Who can estimate the fruit that will be gathered from the sowing of this precious seed of the blood

of our sons? Must it not remain to nourish the earth? How can the men who are permitted to return, who have fought so nobly for truth and righteousness, wholly disregard it in their after life? Mustn't the desire for it remain to bless their lives? Think of what it will do to advance the brotherhood of men and how it will tend to break down the barriers between nations, and prepare the way for the unity of the race!

Let us think, then, how all these combined influences will work together for the development of God's Kingdom and the promotion of the King's business? Those too of the non-christian races, who are permitted to return from this vast strife, to the several corners of the earth, will carry back the deep impressions they received from association with men of noble impulses and lofty aspirations that will act as leaven to the heathen world.

Hence, may it not be that God will turn even this frightful carnage to His own glory, and make it a way for opening the whole world to the coming of Christ and the preaching of the Gospel?

Should this be so, it would be the fulfilment of our Saviour's words, when He tells us that He came "not to send peace but a sword," because through His Divine knowledge of human nature, He knew that the cross must come before the crown, that men must pass "through much tribulation before they could enter the kingdom." This tells in other words that the religious life is a life

long battle, we learn to quit ourselves like men, to be strong in the presence of the enemy that would seek to gain the victory over us, in a word, that we should prove ourselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Do we not see how all these qualities are learned on the field of battle and become the very marks of the true soldier?

Oh, for the heroism, the courage, the loyalty of our brave boys in the king's colours at the front! Why is it that men can be such heroes in khaki and such cowards in the Church? Ought not this splendid heroism in the battlefield put us to shame in the Church? We can be *brave* and *self-sacrificing* about anything else except in our love and duty to God. We heed no hindrance in our pleasures, we brave storms and tempest in our social gatherings, yet they chill our hearts when we are called to God's House.

May it not be that a brighter day is dawning, that this consecrated host that has gone forth to fight the battle of the Lord, and have fought so bravely, and so many have given up their lives as soldiers of the King of Kings, may it not prove that in the Providence of God, they will be amongst the greatest missionaries of our time, and by their noble examples lift up the minds to nobler things than hoarding money and accumulating bonds? For we do surely know, if we have any reason or true knowledge of life, that these things cannot truly enrich us, for say what you will, or think as you may, you know in your heart that the King's business is the only business

that can meet its creditors and pay, not only dollar for dollar, but a hundredfold at the great balancing day, since "there is nothing that a man can give in exchange for his soul." Do not the noble lives of these men who are fighting our battles and, if need be, dying for us make us hang our heads for shame, if we lead selfish lives today? If we give ourselves to selfish ease and pleasure, when our own flesh and blood are bleeding and dying that we may live?

Let us remember that no true Canadian father or mother can hold back any son that is physically fit, from this great struggle, without lasting dishonor to that son and to themselves. Yes, let Canadian mothers and wives know that they could do no greater injury to their sons and husbands, than by holding them back. It is an injury that will be stamped on them through all their lives, the history of the future will point the finger of scorn at them and will mark them as ingrates and cowards and as traitors to their country and compel them to hang their heads. Never in our history has there been such a trumpet call for men to prove their manhood, such an opportunity to claim the highest honor as heroes in a noble cause, to a dignity, to an honor, that all the titles and honors of earth, are as nothing, to an honor that outlasts the stars,—that of living or dying for truth.

Some of our brave lads may never come back, but what of that? Let us remember that they will have their names and their graves marked

with the sign of the cross, to tell us that they died as men and not as selfish cowards. They died fighting for principles they loved more than life. They died that truth and liberty might remain to those they loved in the sacred land that gave them birth, and they have their reward. They realized, each in his own way, that the thing he was fighting for was the King's business for the establishment of the rule of Christ in the world. They were not fighting for their own temporal welfare, for nothing but temporal discomfort and disaster awaited them. They knew that most probably death was before them; yet they faltered not, they faced death in its most awful and most sickening forms for the prize of their high calling.

Here I cannot but quote the words of one who has added much to the world's gladness, and has made millions laugh. Harry Lauder shows that he has the true heart that his humor indicates, and love of his fellow man. In speaking of this awful strife, he asks, "Is it all for nothing that these sojer lads go off to the front laughing and singing, aye, laughing and singing to the very end? What is it," he asks, "what gives them the power?" I believe it is God; take God out of it, then what our soldiers have done, and are doing, would be sheer lunacy. They might better have stayed at home, with those lofty souls that were afraid to fight,—men who had learned what was done to the women of France and Belgium and might be done to the women

of our own country, and yet tried to persuade themselves that it was wrong to kill the vermin of earth that would do such things.

No, those whom we see in our trenches are *m n*, they put away all thoughts of profit or safety.

They chose a life of certain hardship and hourly danger; they walked shoulder to shoulder with death. Then I say, either they were fools, or else God reigns and holds in His hands earth, Heaven and Hell.

They died for us, they died for their mothers, they died for their sweethearts or for their helpless children. They died for the old home and all the memories that cling around it; for the lighted hearth, the clean board, and the prattle of the bairns; for the thought of those far-away days when a dear mother happed them round, and crooned them to sleep with her baby song! "Was it worth while?" he asks, "Are any or all the noble deeds of life worth while? Or is this world a hideous nightmare where those who call themselves men struggle blindly for their own selfish ends: Yes! thank God, it is worth while; the sacrifices that have been wrought are not in vain, it is *not*; for nothing we suffer." Then shall we falter with the blood of our dearest unavenged? Shall Canada betray her sons? Shall we parley with Hell? Shall we make base bargains with those whose hands are red with the blood of our sons?

It is for all or nothing we fight; either we slay

this evil beast, or let it live to curse the world; either we keep faith with our dead, or betray them. There is no half-way house, no compromise possible. Treaties, Pledges, Terms, what are they to a German? No, there is only one thing to be done, and that is *cut him down*, for what is our most precious possession? Is it not our faith in Christ, which is truth and freedom and brotherhood, in a word the King's business? For this our sons have fought and died, for this, then, let us live or die. Shall our sons of the future be ashamed of their sires? Then let us buckle on our harness. Whatever sacrifices are demanded, make them bravely, cheerfully. Stand fast to the end. Let us be worthy of our name as soldiers of the King, engaged in the King's business. Victory is our word today; if we falter before the debt of our dead sons is paid, then we are a degenerate stock, unworthy of our sires. Let us prove today of what stuff we are made, the blood of our ancestors stirs us on, our Honor Roll points the way. Let us give as they have given,—their best that final victory may be ours and so secure the triumph of the King's business.

VI

THE DUTY OF SERVICE

Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

COLL. IV, 17

MAN has but one life, and it is a life that cannot die. What is called death, is but a phase of life, a means of transition to another and more exalted condition of life. So it comes that time and eternity are really the same thing, indefinitely extended, they belong to each other, as the seed belongs to the tree, or the fruit to the flower. Time is the soil out of which eternity springs, the harvest is as the sowing, the future is determined by the *now*, everything centres on the living present. The future can have no influence on man's character or history. This shows us that the future and the present are indissolubly connected by a vital union which never can be broken, and that the coming life is not something which is somehow to begin when the present is past, but something that is to spring out of the present, to succeed it as the harvest succeeds the sowing. Hence it follows that all life is sacred, is really a consecrated service which really has but one end, which is, indeed, the one purpose of life, the one thing we were created to do. Therefore, everything how-

ever great or however small that does not in some way tend to further this great end; as far as we are concerned, is not only useless and vain, but a positive hindrance to our real advancement. And this comes from the fact that this life, has, as we have said, but one purpose,—to be used as a preparation for another. Eternity is the only measure of time, it is its guardian and keeper.

Hence, when we attempt to shut up our life in compartments, divide it up into times and seasons, talk about secular and sacred duties, or desire in any way to separate our daily life from our religion, we are attempting to do an impossible thing, since it is quite impossible to perform a neutral act. It must be religious or irreligious, it must have been done through faith in God, or through lack of faith in Him. This brings us to notice the fact of man's stewardship from which he cannot escape, which is at once his highest good or his most extreme danger: his highest good, if fulfilled, the loftiest dignity that man is capable of receiving, an insignia of honor, that is unfailing and imperishable and higher than any king or potentate of earth is capable of conferring. It is, moreover, an honor—high and mighty as it is—that is open to, and within the reach of all. The humblest may strive with the mightiest, and receive an equal reward, though the advantage is always on the side of the weak, the humble. Yes, the king and his meanest subject work side by side, the rich and

the poor labor in the same field. God is no respecter of persons, so the commander-in-chief and his humblest subaltern are comrades on the same battlefield. Aye, they and the little drummer boy that keeps up his inspiring tattoo, in the face of the enemy, may each by his faithful service, make angels rejoice and have the sign of the cross eternally implanted on his breast by the King of Kings.

But on the other hand, we must remember that the use of time which may bring us imperishable honor, may if abused bring upon us hopeless disaster through an eternal dishonor. This is true no matter how great may be our effort to attain distinction on any field of contest, no matter what position we may have secured, wealth we may have gathered, or again, the high sounding titles we have attached to our name, though it took the whole alphabet to tell of our titles—they are in themselves but as dross, empty baubles, telling of failure and eternal disaster. Why? Because we have failed in our stewardship, our perspective has been foreshortened to view things only from an earthly standpoint, we have made things of earth an *end* not as *means* to an end, they have not been done through, or because of faith in God, but because of faith in ourselves and in things of time. We must never forget, whoever we are or whatever we may be, whether high or low, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, general or subaltern, that we stand absolutely equal in God's sight, all entrusted with the same

stewardship, all His ministers, each in our several place and calling, with talents measured by the unerring hand of God, talents which are entrusted to us to be employed in the Master's service.

These talents, moreover, are, we are told, exactly suited to our use; for it was "every man according to his several ability" in the terms expressed. It is important for us to remember this, for we are often tempted to think we could have done better work in some other condition, but to make this true, we would need a wisdom superior to God. No, my friends, let us be assured that there are no misfits, nor short reckonings about life and its conditions; it is a part of a divine plan. As the sun in the Heavens, we have to go forth each day to our daily labor, to the doing our "little bit" in God's vineyard. Whether that bit be in our peaceful homes in Canada, or in the roaring, shrieking din and blinding vapor of the battle-scarred fields of France or Belgium; an equal glory awaits the faithful laborer. Yes, a fitting reward to every man; it may not be from his comrades, it may not be that V. C. is pinned on his breast by the command of his king and country; but a loftier honor awaits him, pronounced by the King of Kings, "well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The watchword of the Christ was meant to be the watchword of our lives, for He was our example. He had but one ideal in life and that was His Father's business. "I must be about my Father's business;" it was

the one thought of His life. It is most significant for us to remember that His ministry was largely connected with things of earth; for twenty-seven years He wrought and labored as man, His Father's business took Him into the field of common toil, to the carpenter's shop and the ordinary vocations of men, that He might sanctify them and fit them for man. Thus it was that He endeavored to prepare all fields of labor for the Master's use and do His work. And what was all this to us but to teach us the value of time and labor because they were so instrumental in working out God's purpose in the world? So it was that Christ summoned every man to work in His vineyard, promising every man a reward proportioned to his labor—yes, even though he came at "the eleventh hour." There was hope of reward for every man except for him who remained "idle,"—who was not employed in the Master's work, those who utterly failed in their ministry, in the stewardship of the Master's goods. How significant it is that we are told that the unfaithful steward of old, "buried his talent in the earth!" Just what unnumbered millions, in their consuming blindness, are doing this today, planning and thinking only of earth, forgetting the purpose and glory and dignity of their high calling,—that was not to be mere *earth workers* as the ox or the ass, but Divine laborers, fellow-workers with God,—engaged in laying foundations of a great work which will outlast the stars and go on, increasing in beauty and glory as the ages pass.

Thus it was that our great Master taught us the value and end of time and bid us mark the beauty and value of each passing hour. He would bid us reverence today because of tomorrow, in order that we might each day be "a day's march nearer home." Yes, the present is sacred, every moment of it, because of the glorious future. Today we must fulfil our allotted task as God's workmen in the position in which we stand, whether bending our backs in the field of labor, or standing behind our counters, or in the trench, armor clad, waiting for the enemy, ready to do our bit for God and humanity. It is all one service, to which we are called in the work of our ministry. There is nothing that we need more continually to remind ourselves than this,—that there are no neutrals, nor camp followers in God's army. We must be either *fighter* or *traitor* for we are distinctly told that those who do not labor actively for Christ are laboring actively against Him. There is then, we see, no halfway house between Heaven and Hell, as many seem to think who would live without a religious purpose and lose sight of the sacredness of time.

We have a most telling instance of this given in the gospel of "the certain rich man who was clothed with purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day." He was, it would seem, no active transgressor, no brawler nor intemperate man, "no remover of his neighbor's landmark" He was no doubt, indeed one of the most respected members of the community; in short, he was the

man of the big house, and of the long bank account. He was the one man whose death spread a gloom over the whole place in which he dwelt. The praise of him was on every lip. He was the one man whose happiness and good fortune every one envied. This we may well believe, yet when he passes through the transitional door of death, we are permitted to know of his eternal condition, for it was "in hell he lifted up his eyes." Here we may pause to ask what caused this terrible catastrophe in this most respectable man's life? What was his sin? There was only one lodged against him, and that was spiritual indifference, he had forgotten the purpose of life. He had neglected his ministry, he had passed by the sick and the wounded. Like the Levite, he had gone by "on the other side." His brother Lazarus lay at his very gate, his pathetic appeal for help and succor moved the very dogs in the street, while the rich man sat in his palace. Like Gallio of old, "he cared for none of these things." Not until his eyes were opened in another world, was the depth of his folly revealed to him.

And how important it is to remember that it was only when he "lifted up his eyes" that he realized what he had lost! On earth he had looked *down*, his thought was centered on earth, he saw only what earth could give him. "Moses and the prophets" had spoken to him of God's service and had bidden him "worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." Yet he turned a deaf ear to everything but time and self, and so was

placed behind the bar of God's judgment, as an unfaithful steward; while the humble Lazarus, though clothed in rags and covered with sores, was considered worthy of His Kingdom. All literature fails to give us a more striking and effective parable, telling us of the value of time and the purpose of life. It shows us the utter inability of earthly things, even in their most lavish abundance, to supply our need. It tells us too most truly, of our ministry, our stewardship in the sight of God, that we never can be *owners*, only servants under a master to whom we must give an account of what we have done, the way we have employed our talents that He has placed in our hands.

Let our last thought then be, concerning the sacredness of the "common round of our daily task," we are each one on a divine mission, whether we be citizens or soldiers, we have been called by God to do a holy work; especially, I may say, those who have the high privilege and the lofty dignity of being permitted to enter into this holy war, in which we and our beloved allies are now engaged. All the forces of cruelty and oppression are arrayed against us. The welfare of humanity at large is at stake. May we not thank God that our noble sons "have done their deed yet scorned to blot it with a name?" They are the unseen heroes of that "thin, red line" that ever has been the glory of the British race among the nations of the earth, because that line ever has fought for truth and righteousness, for

right and justice between man and man. May those who are now fighting, or are now putting on their armor to fill the ranks of those who have fallen in the tide of war, remember to emulate the deeds of those who have gone before and never forget that they are Christian soldiers, sworn to fight for God and king and country, consecrated for a sacred work and therefore may "take heed to the ministry which they have received of the Lord, that they fulfil it."

VII

LUKE-WARM CHRISTIANS

Because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

REV. III, 16

THESSE words indicate a contemptuous loathing, an absolute disgust and unspeakable contempt, for a type of religious life, that the great seer of Patmos found existing at Laodicea. They remind us of those words of ringing scorn and of absolute condemnation which came from the lips of the Master of the mock religion of the scribes and Pharisees of His day. Nothing seemed to arouse His indignation and contempt so much as lip-service. To the diseased and the fallen, He was ever merciful. For the penitent sinner, His heart was overflowing with tenderness and love, ready to stretch forth His hand, to receive them and bid them "go and sin no more. But for those who would make their service of "mint, anise, and cumin," take the place of holiness of life, His withering indignation knew no bounds, His words of wrath burnt like fire, He spake as if the very gates of Hell were open to receive them.

These words of Christ, as well as those of His loved disciple, in our text, show us the shudder-

ing profanity of an insincere profession, of a service in which the heart has no part. St. James tells us that "a double-minded man, is unstable in all his ways, let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord." Indeed, this is the very kind of man for whom we have no use ourselves, in the most common scenes of life; those who are ever halting by the way, who have not the courage of their convictions, no definite course of action; those who have no grit in them to stand up for what they believe to be right in the face of public opinion; yes, we despise them in our hearts, and have no hesitation in saying "out with them" and we as it were "spew them out of our mouth." No, we don't want men that are "on the fence" to do anything we are interested in, we want men of positive action, who say what they mean and mean what they say.

Now this was the very spirit which animated the mind of St. John, he saw that these men of Laodicea had no definite purpose in their religion. It was to them an unmeaning form, there was nothing which they really desired, in that they were quite content as they were, they were satisfied with their present condition. The words which he puts in their mouth are "thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." Oh, with what a ruthless hand does the Apostle strip off the mask and bid them look at themselves in the mirror of God's truth! In the light of eternity, he reveals their utter

blindness to their real state, and the festering rottenness of their fancied self-sufficiency. He shows them that their boasted wealth was as "moth and rust," their "purple and fine linen" were as filthy rags, their wealth was poverty, their fulness was want, their comfort and ease, were but misery and wretchedness. They were in reality "poor, blind, naked," while all the time he showed them they were standing at plenty's door, food eternal was at hand for their acceptance, for they had been invited to God's banquetting house, yet "like the sow that was washed, they had returned to their wallowing in the mire."

So the apostle would bid them awake from their fatal slumber and seek their fulness where it might be found. Speaking as an ambassador of Christ, he says "I commend thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see," that is, be no longer "luke-warm, neither cold nor hot, but zealous and whole-hearted and repent and I will give thee light." The apostle goes on to show them, that though they had erred from the right way, though they were "poor, blind, and naked," that the door of hope was not closed to them, for He reminds them of the loving words of the Master, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Yes, the fulness is ever waiting whatever be our sin, if we will only turn seeking it, be it only the first earnest appeal of "Father I have sinned against thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son." As we are told, even when his son was "a great way off" the Father ran towards him, put His arms around his neck, and kissed him, and restored his sonship, and recognized in the prodigal a "son that was lost," but now found. Yes, for the repentant sinner, though "feeding on husks the swine might eat," there is mercy and forgiveness, but for those who love their swine husks more than the Father's House, for the "luke-warm," for the half-hearted, for the lip-server; there is naught but contempt and rejection. God must be first or not at all.

All this shows us the tyranny of love, and its absolute nature. It suffers no rivals. It demands all or it will have nothing. It claims heart devotion from the object loved, luke-warmness is fatal, so Christ says, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."

This is the great truth that is being brought home to us today,—that is, the intensity of love; for love of home and country is only another form of love towards God, and it means sacrifice of everything—if need be, of life itself. The love of truth and righteousness, is "above rubies," it is "the pearl of great price," that we must be willing to "sell all that we have" to buy. "To him that overcometh, I will grant to him to sit down on my throne, even as I also overcame and sat down

on my Father's throne."

There are perhaps no words of scripture more searching than the words of our text. They bring us face to face with real things, with the things that count in our life. These are the things that are brought home to us this day as never before in the history of the world.

The value of the really *great things* is being tested, as never before, in the crucible of a world-war; the dross is being cast aside; the pure gold revealed. For as it has been said, "war is the great revealer," it shows men as they really are, not as they appear in their outward acts to men and nations, it shows their inward impulses that actuate their lives. The moral restraints that influence us in times of peace, are in times of war removed, show us exactly what we are, so it shows men at their best and at their worst. In times of peace, Germany was deemed one of the most advanced nations of the world, she was first in science, first in industrial skill, first in philosophy, and in so-called "culture," in music and poetry, she was certainly not behind other nations, while her perfect organization was the admiration of the world; yet war has revealed her a whited sepulchre hiding the most hideous corruption of lust and cruelty and treachery and revenge. She has not scrupled to add to the world's history, new pages of horrors hitherto unknown; she has, in truth, revealed herself absolutely inhuman; for as St. James says, "to be set on fire of Hell, being earthly, selfish, devilish."

On the other hand, we have seen nations that were taunted, by their "cultured" neighbors as a nation of "shopkeepers," given over to comfort and ease, and "muddling" and grabbing everything in sight in the way of money or territory, a nation that had settled on its lees and had lost its old time vigor of action and strength of moral purpose. Yet we find this same nation, in time of war, the wonder of the world in her mighty resourcefulness and untold sacrifices that her people were prepared to make for the rights of weaker nations, and for the rescue of the fallen she was willing to stake her all that truth and justice might remain to men, showing that these were really the principles that governed her life. Going across the channel, we might have seen what was called "a nation of triflers" and what appeared a frivolous people, bent only on pleasure and excitement and lacking in moral courage, but in the crucible of war, we find them devoting themselves to heroic sacrifice for the defeat of tyranny and injustice, and willing, to the last man or woman to die for their country, and for the cause to which they had put their hand. And what may not be said for our own Canada and the other colonies and our stalwart brothers of the United States? Little did we think of the loyalty and courage that lay hidden in the breasts of their people, that generations to come would tell of their mighty deeds and heroism in the hour of danger, of their willingness to make the great sacrifice, if need be to die for the life of men.

Thus, we see, though war is in itself truly Hell, yet even this, is better than lust and brutality and the despotism of war lords; for it proves men, and gives them opportunity to show what is in them,—that they are neither cold nor luke-warm, when the cause of Christ is at stake, and the welfare of the world hangs in the balance.

So today, in all that welter of blood and slaughter across the sea, you see noble manhood and womanhood standing out in bold relief against the Egyptian darkness, not only in individuals, but on all sides, a mighty host, who are ready to be offered, marching to the front, each one knowing, that if he attacks at dawn, that he may die before night, yet “not a man dismayed,” nor turning himself “back in the day of battle.” Yes, God be praised, it has been the great searching of the nations. So it comes that the religious spirit, that has sprung out of the ruins of the devastated countries of Europe, is now glowing in the hearts and minds of our people, giving them untold strength for heroism, and courage, and sacrifice. Men are discovering, as a brilliant novelist has just told us, “that religion is the first thing and the last thing, and until a man has found God, and has been found by God, he begins at no beginning and he works to no end.”

So it is that this war has been as an angel's trump, saying to the nations of the earth, “wake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” It has shown us our true state, that we have been slumbering on our

watch tower, and so it comes to us as a great opportunity to lift us out of the pit of indifference into which we have fallen, and make us try to really accomplish some of those lofty ideals about which we talk so glibly these times, but about which we, after all, make so little sacrifice of time or pleasure. We must realize more and more that not a man nor woman amongst us, not a soul so insignificant, nor a citizen so small, that he cannot make a deep and important contribution to the winning of the cause to which we are pledged.

It is the commonplace things of life we know, which are of the most importance at all times but especially at such times as this when waste and indulgence are simply criminal, and a noble spirit of sacrifice can be shown at home, as well as by those who go out to the front to make the great sacrifice, if need be, of life.

But we may say that there is no way that Christians in general have shown their luke-warmness more than in the cause of missions, that great cause that laid so close to the heart of the Master, "those other sheep" which He bid His Church to gather in. What, we may ask, does the cause of missions mean? It means in reality, *ourselves*, for it is only as we give to others that we ourselves are blessed. Missions and spiritual life go hand in hand, they stand or fall together, the law of life is giving and receiving, we must give if we would get. As the world has no place for half-hearted men, so God has no

place for the luke-warm. These are the greatest hindrances to the cause of Christ in the world today.

It is not the open transgressor whose evil life is known to all men that works the most evil, in that his sin bears its own condemnation, it is the weak-kneed, half-hearted, double-serviced, the good-lord, good-devil, sort of men and women, that are afraid to confess themselves altogether Christians.

What the Church is crying for today, so sorely needs in this hour of peril when the very foundations of the earth are being moved, is men and women who have the courage of their convictions, men who like our soldiers are ready for sacrifice, for wherever there is true life, there is fulness and progress, there is a consuming ambition for greater things.

But how little of this do we see in our lives? We have let Christianity appear to be a selfish religion, practised only for ease and comfort in the next world without sacrifice in this.

Selfishness is the devil's hall-mark. In direct proportion to the extent that self is present, Christ is absent. As Christ gave Himself for us, so must we give ourselves for others in Him.

God in the person of His Son, became Incarnate and took our nature upon Him, so that His life might be ours, and we might follow Him who was **THE WAY.**

VIII

THE TRUE STRENGTH OF A NATION

THANKSGIVING DAY

Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

PROV. XIV, 34

CAUSE and effect are two things that are inseparably joined and cannot be put asunder.

They belong to one another as the day belongs to the night, and are the fixed sequents of each other. Our whole life is governed on this principle. Harvests of whatsoever nature, depend on the sowing, we "do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles." So, too, is it with the law of increase, this law is written large and plain, in the penalty that comes to individuals, as well as nations.

Think, for instance, of Russia today. For a century she had denied liberty of thought and freedom of speech to her people, she had kept them in ignorance, and men were steadily exiled for daring to teach the people to read and think for themselves. The ruling powers of this vast country gave but ignorance and superstition to its people; who are now, therefore, true to the

law of increase—giving back riot and bloodshed. So, too, the Czar and his autocrats administered cruelty and harshness, and so had returned by the same law, hatred and revenge, till at length they found that the prison walls of Siberia enclosed the hotbeds of revolution and the seeds of anarchy and bloodshed. Today it has burst out in open violence, to sweep out of existence, the system of tyranny which has perpetuated such darkness and suffering. Thus we see that Russia is reaping of her own sowing in the maddened uprising of her people, in the overthrow of her ruling princes, and in the exile of her Emperor.

Indeed, her latest revolution is an open testimony to the law of which we have spoken, it is the increase of a continuous reign of misrule and injustice. Political corruption, greed, and bribery, were openly employed; assassination was made to take the place of justice, and oppression, of equal rights; so that the whole government of the country was in the hands of private combines and wholesale plunderers, who robbed the treasuries of the country to add to their own gain. No wonder that the bells rang with joy at the advent of the co-called "New Regime."

Now the great question that comes to us at this hour, is, "Has the history of this nation no word of warning for us?" For we too, most surely, must reap as we have sown. We may say that the whole world realizes that Canada occupies a wonderful vantage ground in the history of nations. It may be said that never before have

greater possibilities been set before a people. She has reached a crisis in the affairs of men,—the great establisher of nations, in her hands possibilities of material enlargement, hitherto unknown. Thus we see that Canada has reached a very critical moment in her political and material history, as we have said, the eyes of the whole world are resting upon her and watching her progress as a nation builder, whether her people shall prove themselves patriots or traitors. Whether Canada shall show to the world that she is a nation that fears God and loves righteousness, or is a poor mean, selfish mob, that sees nothing but what it blindly believes is its own interest, and is willing to accept peace at any price and under any conditions.

Hence we may say that the very life as a nation is at stake this day, and in one sense is being moulded by us, its future is largely in our hands, for it is realized, as we have said, that she is laying the foundations of that which under God is destined to be one of the largest and most influential nations of the earth. Indeed, it was said a short time ago by one of the first statesmen of England that he believed that a lapse of fifty years would find Canada, the virtual centre of British Dominions. The greatness of our task may show the deep need, there is for Canada and her people to realize, especially at this time, the greater elements that combine to give strength to a nation. What then, we may ask is her great need? Now in seeking an answer to this ques-

tion, it may be well for us to consider what has led to the wreck of nations in the past? Well, at this present time, we have before us object lessons that may enable us, in part, to answer this question. Spain and Portugal, for instance, were at one time among the foremost nations of the earth, "their silver and their gold was multiplied," their ships were found on every sea, they were among the richest in colonial possessions. They were victorious by sea and land. They left the records of their conquering might in almost every corner of the earth. Yet if we look to these nations today, we find that their glory has departed from them, they have fallen in the race, their countries are but hotbeds of anarchy and violence and the home of tyranny and misgovernment. Cruelty and bloodshed are made to take the place of justice and fair dealing. It is openly confessed that at least from a moral standpoint almost the whole great Latin race, which formed at one time the most powerful race that ever existed, is today practically dead. If we seek for the cause of the downfall of this renowned race, we believe we find it, first, in the greed, tyranny and injustice of its ecclesiastical and political rulers who first kept it in ignorance, then burdened it with unjust taxation, and finally crushed its life by denying it individual freedom, the liberties of a free people, and the rights of an honest citizenship. The result of this unjust oppression was to crush the mental and moral growth of the people, and to engender in them a spirit of an-

archy and rebellion, bringing about the present overthrow of the temporal and spiritual powers, which in the end we believe will lead to the final divorce of the people from both Church and state. We may have some ideal of the ignorance of the common people, the criminal neglect of the cause of education in these two countries when we are told that in Spain with a population of over 16,000,000 only 2,000,000 can read or write, while in Portugal eighty-seven per cent are in the same condition. Can we wonder that this oppressed and down-trodden people have risen in revolt at the tyranny of their old time oppressors and have proclaimed war to the knife, against church and throne?

What then is the lesson we draw from the practical wrecks of these nations which at one time were so renowned among the nations of the earth? Why, in the first place, let us learn of the priceless value of freedom, which means liberty of thought, liberty of speech, liberty to worship God according to the dictates of every man's conscience. Next we learn the absolute need of education. Our religious secular education must ever hold the first position in the minds of our people, for it is true today as it ever has been that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." We must never forget that we may live and grow and develop as a nation, without cruisers or aircrafts or dreadnaughts. Yes, even without millionaires, and indeed we hope to see the day when a multi-millionaire will be impossible, but

if we would build up our nation on a permanent foundation, its great corner stone must be the educational and religious culture of our people. For we must remember that after all that is said, or can be said about the establishment of a state, or the building up of a people, there is only one foundation that cannot be moved with regard to any work, whether of a nation or an individual, and that is *faith* in *God*, which the whole world is learning this day as never before. This is the only thing that can bind us together and hold us secure, and we may say that the main use and purpose of secular education is to so develop our mind as to enable men to trace out more fully the wonder of God's law and the ways of His working. St. Paul warns his son Timothy, with a warning that never should be forgotten, when he tells him that "the love of money is the root of all evil," for it has been on this rock that nation after nation has fallen. The most subtle deceit and cruel lie that the devil ever wedged into a human heart, is that material possession can give security or permanent strength to a people or to a nation. When the great Satrap of old set up his image of gold on the plains of Dura before which he bid "all kingdoms, nations and languages" bow the knee, he was but giving dramatic expression to an insanity that is as old as the race, the worship of materialism or that which in some form or other represents money.

Thus it is that materialism spells the doom of any people as is abundantly proved in the awful

catastrophe which has fallen upon the whole world this day. In the case of Germany, we see the moral iniquity to which it leads when it is made the idol of a people. She had made it the leading thought of her present generation. She had set up the golden image of might before the eyes of the world to which she would make all nations bow the knee. In the furtherance of her insolent designs, she has sunk to the lowest degradation. In outraging every law of God or man, she has aroused the moral indignation of the whole world in such a way as to call forth the most splendid response that the world has ever seen in all its history. It is here that we find the first note of our thanksgiving today, our thanksgiving for material blessings, is we may be overshadowed by something that is higher than earth. Yes, the circle of our thanksgiving takes a larger sweep and we thank Him not only for our daily bread for the year that is past, but for the countless evidences of His Almighty Hand in furthering our cause and in giving our arms success and inspiring our troops with that spirit of heroism which is a household word in every land.

We may believe that the three years of this war have done more for the establishment of Canada than a hundred years of her history; the story of these years, it is true, was written in blood; but Ah! my friends, they will turn to letters of gold when the name of Canada is mentioned by the generations that follow us. Yes, Canada has

soaked the soil of Flanders with the blood of her sons, yet in this glorious sacrifice she has proved herself a nation that fears God and loves righteousness and believes that it is better to die and be free, than to live and be a slave.

With heart and voice we may thank God this day that He has breathed His spirit into so many hearts to fight His battles for truth and liberty, and to overthrow those powers of darkness that would enslave the world. Our heartfelt thanksgiving goes out today not only for God's continued mercies during these trying times in supplying our temporal needs, but more especially for His spiritual blessings seen in the loyalty and devotion of our brave defenders in this awful strife. It was a day of peril and of darkness, the enemy had set in upon us like a flood, and it was surely of the Lord's mercies we were not consumed. We believe that the victory will be ours because it is, we believe, the Lord's battle. Right and might are drawn up in battle array, right must win.

We are living in the midst of the world's convulsion, destined to set the course of the world's history for centuries to come. It is indeed the hour of destiny for the world, for the nations, for the Church; yet in the midst of all the peril and bloodshed, it is not difficult to trace the footprints of the Son of Man. Not if we look only upon the outward aspect of the war and see only the blood and the misery and the cruelty and the barbarism, and hear only the boom and

terror of the guns; but if we look deeper and see the noble sacrifices that are made for the principles of our holy faith, see the unshrinking heroism of those who fight, we may be well assured that this is essentially a great spiritual conflict. On one side we see the last and the strongest effort yet made in the history of men for the establishment of the old pagan idea of holding dominion by sword and spear, and on the other, a world-wide league of free people banded together for the crushing out of this adder's poison and the establishing a world-wide dominion of love and brotherhood in which truth and justice must reign supreme. Already we can see signs of its coming by men's being drawn into one common struggle, shedding their blood for a common cause, and giving their lives for the same undying principles. It is for these things we thank God this day that He is leading the whole world to recognize the sanctity of His laws, and that it is righteousness only that exalteth a nation, and that service and sacrifice are the only things that count in estimating the worth of men and the wealth of nations.

IX

THE HOME BASE AND ITS DUTIES

As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff.

I SAM. XXX, 24

THE event to which our text refers was a scene in the life of David, when he went forth to battle against the Amalekites who had burned the cities of Judah and had taken many captives, among whom were members of his own household. With a little band of six hundred men, he set out in pursuit of the conquering hosts, but on coming to the mountain gorge of the river Besor, it was found, that two hundred of his men were so wearied from the burden of the way, that they were unable to ford the rapid waters and were therefore left behind to guard the tents, while David, with his four hundred men pressed on in pursuit of the enemy, and not only overtook them and slew them with a great slaughter, but recovered all the captives with a vast amount of treasure.

On their return home from their great victory, there came up the question of the division of the spoil, it was held by some, that they only who had done the fighting should be partakers, that to the

victors belong the spoils, but the generous, noble heart of David would not permit him to admit of this injustice. He maintained, that those who remained behind, were victors in will if not in deed, in that it was not cowardice but inability which prevented them from being in the ranks of war. In wish and desire they had been present. They had done their part in guarding the stuff and protecting the home base. Wherefore, David issued his command that there should be no distinction in the way of honor and so when he came to the two hundred who remained behind, he saluted them also as victors and laid down a principle of battle which forever after became a law in Israel,—“the part of him that goeth to the battle, so shall his part be, that remaineth at the stuff, they shall share alike.”

The words of David of old seem to have a special fitness for us today. The first shock and panic of this most unrighteous war have passed to a sense of rigid endurance. The first flame of loyalty and enthusiasm that sped our valiant sons to the rescue of the downtrodden, has settled down into the steady fire of the nation's wrath. It has called forth its whole strength, they have counted out the bitter cost and struggle necessary and mean to fight it through to the end, come what may. There never has been such an assemblage of forces brought face to face in the history of men, nor has there ever been such a widespread unity of thought and action throughout the wide earth concerning the vast issues that are at stake and the importance of the victory.

In the great battle for the faith in ages past, the great war cry was "Athanasius against the world," but the battle which is now raging to maintain the truth of the Christian faith is practically "Germany against the world." She has thrown down the gauntlet of defiance before the most powerful nations of the world, in her determined effort to enforce the principle of her pagan rule over the people of the earth. Germany by her open confession is fighting to establish the validity and permanence of the doctrine that "Might is right." Might she asserts is the supreme right, and the dispute as to what is right, is to be decided always by the arbitrament of war. The weak must go to the wall and be crushed under the heel of power. Among all political sins she tells us, the sin of feebleness is the most contemptible. In the words of the Kaiser himself, he declares that "only one is master of this country, and that is I. Who opposes me I will crush to pieces, so I command. We Hohenzollerns take our crown from God alone, and to God alone we are responsible; so he says the wish of the king is the one supreme law." The great Bismarck asserted that "with us there is no sovereign will but that of the king. It is he alone who wills, because he alone has the right to do so." The leading minds who govern the thoughts of the ruling class in Germany today, assert that the humanitarianism of the gospel is naught but senile weakness, vague idealism and irrational sentimentality; that the Christ idea of philan-

thropy and brotherly love, under which the missionaries work, must be stamped out with all energy.

Here are the issues that are at stake today, against which we fight and it will take but little thought to tell us, in spite of all the Christian profession of the German people, that nothing could be more definitely opposed to the principles of Christ who proclaimed the blessedness of the weak and bade us love our enemies and dwell in peace with all men, and that "he who loveth not his brother abideth in death." We see, therefore, that the principle of the German rule is pure paganism and under it the world would revert to a state of barbarism. They are proving this by their inhuman acts this day. Should not we then that are at the home base, or as our text says, "abide with the stuff" do our part in this great struggle for truth and righteousness? Should we not lift up our continual prayer for this great triumph of right? For we do most surely believe that there is a power not of ourselves that makes for righteousness in shaping and controlling the evolution of the human race for some great end not revealed as yet. Our destiny is in His hands. He can bring good out of evil. We are therefore convinced that He in His own way is working out His purposes in this hideous carnage and in the future will make clear His purpose and will give us new life through this terrible baptism of blood. Yet although we do surely believe this to be true, this does not relieve us from personal responsi-

bility, we who "abide by the stuff." The question is, what can we do? For we must remember that we too are like them of old time, sworn soldiers and stand in the rank and file of God's great army. We must put on our whole armor. We do not realize as we ought, that the most effectual of all weapons are spiritual weapons. A most wonderful illustration of this is the instance given in the chapter from which our text is taken. The resistless hosts of Amalek had swept through the coasts of Judah, as the German hordes through Belgium, bringing destruction with fire and sword and had taken unlimited plunder. The heart of the people had waxed faint. Fear and terror had taken hold of them, for what were David and his four hundred men as opposed to the mighty hosts of Amalek? But David knew assuredly what we often forget; the source of his strength. Therefore, before going into battle he put himself into God's hands and asked for guidance in fervent prayer. God said to him, "pursue and thou shalt overtake and conquer him and recover all that he hath taken." Yes, "if God be on our side we will not fear what man can do unto us." And we have this to comfort us and give us confidence in our petitions, in that there never was a war in which we could so confidently feel that we are fighting for a righteous cause. This, we may say, is the unanimous conviction of the civilized world, of which Germany is no longer a part.

Since right must in the end conquer, it is our

prayer that God may be pleased to "stretch forth His hand to be our defence against all our enemies," and grant us His peace, for we must remember that it is only His peace that can be permanent. There might be a peace, a mere cessation of hostilities, the hatchet of discord among the nations, might be for the time buried, and the world's peace be as distant as ever. So long as the pagan curse of militarism is allowed to exist, so long as the barbaric rule of might against right is a nation's law, so long as tyranny and oppression and the oligarchy of emperors and war lords is recognized amongst men; so long will men bite and devour one another, so long will our peaceful valleys be drenched with the blood of the slain, so long will the cry of the widow and the orphan be heard pleading to heaven for vengeance for man's sin. We see, therefore, if we would have peace we can only have it in one way—by making the world *ready for peace*. We can have peace only in exact proportion to the extent we can remove from the minds and thoughts of men, the moving causes, the unchristian principles which called forth this war. In a word, there can be no possible peace, so long as Germany is Germany; for by her own confession, she exists only by making war.

It may be that *we ourselves* are not ready for peace and that God will need yet again to send "his sore judgments" upon us before we can learn our need of righteousness as a nation. So before we cast the stone at Germany, let us think about

ourselves. How often do we and our people act on the principle that might is right? How often do we push with the shoulder of oppression and make the weak take the wall? How often do we bite and devour one another with hard speeches and bitter words? How often is "the devil take hindmost," the principle of our action?

So we see that if we who "tarry by the stuff" would pray for peace, we must first pray for ourselves that God would be pleased to prepare *us* for peace, that He would drive out from us, wrath and anger and evil-speaking and pride and selfishness and intolerance, and give us instead the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love and brotherhood and sympathy for all men. For it is manifestly an act of impiety and a profanation of the sacred office of prayer, to pray for peace and happiness, and still to continue the habits and practices which make peace and happiness impossible. So we see that it is a sort of blasphemy to ask for peace, unless we make every effort to put hatred and greed out of the world. *Ora et labora* is a sacred maxim of the church. Unless we follow up our prayer by our individual help in promoting peace, we are but mocking God, who alone can give us peace. Hence we see that it is both idle and profane to pray for peace unless we work for it, and we do not work for it while we remain inactive and satisfy ourselves by expressing in a religious way a desire that it may come. Peace cannot come till there is justice and fair dealing amongst the nations. Its primary im-

portance must be elevated before the eyes of men, till it becomes the ideal of the nations, and so at length it will be demanded by the united voice of men. Then and then only will it come, and it will not only come, but it will stay and God's blessing will rest upon the earth. Men will "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, neither shall they learn war any more for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

X

GOD AND BAAL

If the Lord be God, follow Him; if Baal, follow him.

I KINGS XVIII, 21

THE words of our text refer to the great defection of God's people, under Ahab, the apostate King of Israel, in the days of the prophet Elijah, for as he tells us, "the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword, while I only am left" to contend the hosts of Baal. But the time of judgment was near, a great crisis was approaching, when a choice had to be made between the seen and the unseen. The influences of the seen were looming large in the eyes of the people, the worshippers of Baal were represented by a great body of four hundred and fifty priests or teachers, while Elijah himself was the only prophet and teacher of the power and influence of the Unseen, without any power or influence of earth, without any protection from the hate or malice of his enemies. Yet though he stood absolutely alone in the majesty of his great position, he boldly threw down the gauntlet of his defiance before the the King and the assembled hosts of Baal, he challenged them to open

combat, he dared them to enter the lists with him, single handed and defenceless as he was. Nor was his power overestimated, though the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal "cried aloud from morning until noon," though they cut themselves with knives and lances after their manner in their insane fury, "there was neither voice nor hearing nor any that answered," while the victory of the prophet was complete and final.

This astounding effect of spiritual power was the answer given to the challenge found in our text thrown down before the mammon-worshippers of his day by the prophet of old. But the need of this warning was not confined to his day, for it is always needed. Indeed, there is nothing that God's people need at this hour more than this self-same challenge. If the Lord be God, follow Him; for it is not too much to say that the Christian Church is this day being weighed in the balances, as never before in history. She has been practically shoved into a corner, and her fundamental principles, are pronounced out-classed and outworn and out of harmony with the best interests of men. Yes, the distinctive principles on which the Christian Church has been founded, and which its great founder asserted to be the necessary elements of its life and power have been (by one of the most powerful institutions of the world) set at naught and scoffed at, as indications of puerile weakness, and not only foolish, but absolutely immoral and wholly unworthy the ambitions of the human race. We

are told, by these would-be teachers that it was said in old time "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," but I say unto you "Blessed are the valiant, for they shall make the earth their throne." Ye have heard it said "blessed are the peace-makers," but I say unto you "Blessed are the war-makers, for they shall be called the children of the god of war, who is greater than Jehovah." This is the gospel of those who "sit in the seats of the mighty" and bear rule over the German people today. This new gospel that "might is right," which has so clearly shown itself in in the ruling class in Germany, could not in all reason, be made by those who still believe in the God revealed by Jesus Christ. Never did the priests of Baal, even in the darkest days of Israel, propound more utterly Pagan principles, more utterly subversive of the whole teaching of Christ.

We see, then, that the whole civilized world has come to a great impasse, to the parting of the ways, where it is forced to make a choice between two great principles of action, between faith in the seen or in the unseen, between the spiritual and the material as the ground of hope and confidence of nations. So the old time challenge of the ancient prophet rings out once more. History is repeating herself, and the question asked by the Christian today is that of Elijah of old." "If the Lord be God, follow Him." Pagan might was never more powerfully represented, than by Germany at this hour, for she not only leads the

world in industry, and art, in science and philosophy and material advancement, but she has produced the most powerful military organization, the most complete system of secret and strategic operation, combined with the most destructive instruments of war, the world ever has seen, or indeed are possible to imagine. We find in her, then, what we may call the perfection of the material, the very best that the world of today can do; and that best is this day, by the Providence of God, being placed in the balances, we believe that it is the crucial, if not the final struggle among the nations for the supremacy of the material. The seen and the unseen are drawn up in battle array. It is the holy war, the veritable Crusade of our day, by which we would deliver our beloved Jerusalem, the Christian Church from the hands of the infidel and the Turk, for they have deluged our fields with blood, have "thrown down our altars, and slain our prophets with the sword." Yes, we may believe, that this awful, most sickening strife, is the "Armageddon" of God, God's scourge of the world's sin, but most especially the sin of permitting the barbarism of war.

For we must remember, that this war is between professedly Christian nations. Therefore, so-called Christian people must be responsible for the conditions which brought about this deadly conflict, and the price of this sin is now being paid, and the awful weight of the price may tell us the extent of our transgression. One of our

most glaring sins, has been the way we have lied about our desire for peace. Yes, we would have peace so long as it did not cost us anything, and so long only; for we were not prepared to make any sacrifices for it. Now God is calling with trumpet tongue for those sacrifices today. Oh, how the cries of the widows and the orphans, the "mothers that are weeping for their children" rise up in judgment against us this day, because the professed children of peace have labored only for war. But now God has permitted the very mouth of hell to be opened, in the havoc and ruin, in the crime and cruelty, in the butchery and slaughter of this hour to convince us of our sin. God has permitted the evil passions of men to work out their own destruction by compelling the nations who have been forced into the cruel assassination of this war in order to compel them not only to sue for, but *demand* peace, henceforth, among the nations. Demand by solemn league and covenant to utterly renounce the arbitrament of the sword in settling the affairs of the nations. Should this be the blessed result of this war and the world through the Providence of God be prepared for the advent of peace, would we not be able to look back upon it with reverent awe, as a divine struggle for righteousness and see in it a great turning point in man's history? Aye, a sort of resurrection from the dead, a rolling back of the great stone which lay at the mouth of the sepulchre of materialism and setting free a new life for the world, "the Christ that is to be."

Then, surely, the heroes of our battlefield would never die, for they would be the martyrs of our race, their memory would be kept continuously, as those who have shed their blood in sacrifice for the life of men, an offering well pleasing unto God. Aye, the mothers that bore them could thank God in their tears, that He had honored them in those very pangs that gave birth to heroes.

We may believe that the blessed results of this war will be unending, for it is not only a holy war for truth and righteousness, as we have said, but it is a scourge of God which brings to our vision that ever memorable scene in the temple courts and the Master with the ruthless scourge in His hand driving out the insolent profaners. May not this war be the scourge of God once again, in the hands of the great messenger of peace, driving out the profaners of His great temple in the world,—driving out not only the professed paganism of Germany, but the unexpressed, though real, pagan practices of other nations, who are called Christian? It was said of God's people of old that "They worshipped the Lord, yet served their own Gods." Of how many can it be said of the Israel of today? They do not openly renounce faith in the unseen, as Germany has, but they profess faith in God, faith in Christ, faith in those divine agencies that are working for the welfare and unity of the race; but yet they "serve their own Gods," in that "their heart goes after their coveteousness." Their real trust is

not in God after all; but, like the German, in material might, that is in money, or in what money can bring. They are, many of them, ready as any German to "shove with the shoulder" of oppression, push the weak to the wall, and forget the eternal law of brotherhood. So we see that it is not only Germany that needs the avenging scourge of this cleansing war, it is France and Russia, it is England and America, and last but not least it is our own Canada. We too have given ourselves in a large degree, to forget the *real things* and worship the gods of earth, the gods of wealth, of stocks and bonds, of eating and drinking, of luxury and ease, of fashion and "purple and fine linen," we have forgotten the Lazarus at our gates. May not God by this national scourge be cleansing His Temple, driving out the lip-servers of our day? Thus it is, therefore, that today He is "calling down fire from heaven," as in days of old for the destruction of idolatry in the land, and the establishment of his true service.

In proof of this, may we not, as we look abroad, see a sort of regeneration already creeping over the land? A Pentecostal wave of God's Holy Spirit entering into the hearts of men through the influence of this war? Most markedly is this seen in England. She was awakened not only from her civil and social trifling and slumber; but from her mental and moral torpor. England was allowing herself to come to be influenced by the poisoned philosophies of Germany, to adapt her

mental and spiritual attitudes with regard to the Christian faith, which led to a widespread questioning of many of the fundamental principles of Christianity. So, many in her land had become lifeless and indifferent to real things, had given themselves to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," So, like the prodigal of old, they deserted "their Father's House" and spent their substance in "rioting and revelry;" but when the bugle was heard, and the trumpet of battle was sounded and the scourge of war reached them, they too like the prodigal "came to themselves" and realized that no man could help them in their need, so they came back to their Father's House" and fell upon their knee with the cry of the prodigal upon their lips. A solemn hush of prayer brooded over the land, even gay and frivolous France caught up the cry for help, and the inspiration of a new life, in fighting for the cause of truth and righteousness and reverence for the Christian faith. Hence we see the hand of God leading the world through this great sacrifice of blood and treasure that it might be cleansed from its sin and restored to new life. Surely the rolling sea of blood, whose rising tide, we may say, laps the very foundations of civilization—must bear fruit in the life of the world, must humble the proud arrogance of men and tell them of something that is mightier than the sword.

For we believe that God is offering to the world a great object lesson of the instability of earthly things, so plain that "he who runs may read" and

so bidding us choose that which cannot pass away, helping us to make our choice between the seen and the unseen.

XI

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

MATT. XII, 29

IN these days of terror and bloodshed, when all the powers of Hell and darkness are let loose, when we may say that the whole world is in battle array, when millions of so-called Christians are meeting each other face to face and are thirsting for each other's blood, it may be asked, do not the words of our text seem not only as empty sounds but as a bitter mockery? For where can love and brotherhood be found amid this awful carnage where the very ground is soaked by our brothers' blood? It cannot be wondered that this question should cause difficulty and perplexity to numbers of Christian people for they read in their bibles Christian precepts about loving our enemies, doing good to those that hate us. He bids us to forgive our enemies not only "seven times," but to seventy times seven "that He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Yet in spite of all this, we find millions of Christian people pouring out countless millions of men and money to work out what at first sight seems the direct contrary of all this

plain teaching of the Master, and we are compelled to ask if there can be an answer to all this seeming contradiction? In attempting our answer, let us think for a moment what would have been the result if England and her noble allies had obeyed the letter and not the spirit of this law and refused to come to the rescue of Belgium from the grinding tyranny of insolent war lords. They would have come to the level of Germany, they would have sold their birthright as a nation, which is their love of truth and justice and equal rights between man and man, they would have bowed the knee to the Baal of brutal might, they would have done their part to enslave the world, and put the yoke of servitude upon their own necks and permitted the Moloch of the earth to accomplish his work and dominate the earth.

We never must forget those most significant words of the Master, "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword." Nor yet that other picture of Him standing in the temple with that scourge of small cords in his hand with which, in righteous indignation, he lashed those insolent traffickers that would profane God's Holy Temple and drove them as common cattle from its sacred precincts. Here, surely, is a case in point. It is God's Holy Temple of truth and righteousness that is being profaned this day by the ruthless tread of insolent war lords that would trample underfoot the principles of the Christian faith; that would barter truth for self interest and make

traffic of instincts which Christ has buried deep in the human heart. Who then, I ask, could imagine that the cause of righteousness would be served, or the true interests of mankind were advanced if we were to refrain from resisting evil when it attacks us in the form of German inhumanity, or meekly turn "the other cheek" to the savage smiting of a worse than heathen Hun? Such a course, you see, would be plainly disastrous to the world and civilization. Yes, such a policy, if generally pursued, would mean nothing less than the wrecking of the higher life of Europe. It is not too much to say that no man can be neutral today and save his honor. He must, in heart and will, be an active combatant or a traitor to his country. The pacifist is a shirker, however he may try to hide his contemptible spirit under the cloak of Christian non resistance, they would cry, "Peace when there is no peace," for as God warns us there should be "no peace for the wicked." He tells us too that "he bears not the sword in vain" that is, that it is through the sword he will accomplish his purpose. So today, we believe that God is accomplishing his purpose by overcoming that "Giant of Gath" that has challenged the Christian nations of the earth and has defied the armies of the living God. We see then, that resistance to crime and brutality is not only allowed to Christians; but required of them, in the defence of the weak and the downtrodden as nations and individuals. They too, must see that they "Bear not the sword in vain," and they

are surely fighting God's battles; for if ever an armed host entered into battle for a righteous cause, it is the allies today. Their cause is just in the eyes of the whole civilized world. Germany has absolutely no case no *casus belli*, outside her own insatiate greed of conquest, and willingness to employ all the agencies of evil within her power to insure her corrupt designs. For a whole generation, she has kept this evil star as the guiding hope of her people. It was embedded in the daily thought of the rising generation as the deliberate resolve of the whole nation. The day was their star of destiny which never was allowed for one moment to disappear from the deliberate purpose of the people. Every day brings to light fresh instances of Germany's most infamous duplicity, her deeply laid plot against the freedom of the world was dug deeper year by year until the time came. The finger of chance pointed to the hour they had so long waited for, "the day" of their evil desire, when through brutal might they should set out as their great chancellor so characteristically said, "to hack their way to Paris." The Germans are an astute people, but they have been caught in their own snare and have been betrayed by evil advisers to make many blunders, but the most colossal of all their blunders was in their confidence in the *superman*, they forgot to reckon with the *superhuman* and forgot that there were powers greater than those of earth that might stand in the way. Although they professed God:

with their lips, they denied Him by their acts, they openly defied the principles of God's Law and therefore must stand condemned before God and man.

Here was and will be, we believe, the cause of their defeat. Yes, this is what cheers our heart today that we believe that God is on our side; as the Psalmist says, "We will not fear what man can do unto us." This, all through, has been the marked feature of this war; it was surely no human power that stayed the brutal might of Germany in its mad rush for Paris and "turned them back in the day of battle," and whether the angels of God were seen or unseen at Mons or Ypres or the Marne they, we believe, were assuredly there to rescue God's heroes from "the burning fiery furnace" which was "seven times heated." The morale of the troops in this great struggle has been altogether unique; in the midst of all this din of battle and shriek of shell, there seems the calm of a most deliberate purpose; there is the appearance of an individual consecration, as though every man felt that he was called of God to do his sacred work, and if need be to offer his life in sacrifice. Such courage, such loyalty, such self-sacrificing devotion to duty, and with all, such never ceasing cheerfulness in every adverse condition, never has been seen or known. Great things for the welfare of the world are at stake and they are conscious of it and they feel that there is a call for every man to do his duty. Death seems to have lost its terror

to these men, there is but one thing and that is to "play the game," to "carry on, to see it through" whatever betide. The supreme call for sacrifice seems to have transformed them into a nobility of which they themselves are unconscious. The terrible issues of life and death are day by day before them, they are brought face to face with real things. Men that were vain and foolish and empty-headed at home become the resolute veterans of the battlefield, and realize their responsibility as men, as one of those heroes who has now cheerfully borne his part has nobly written:

"There are millions here to whom the mere consciousness of doing their duty has brought a peace of mind hitherto unknown. As for myself, I was never happier than I am at present: there is a novel spice added to life by the daily risks and the knowledge that at last you are doing something into which no trace of selfishness enters. One can die once only: nowadays the chief concern that matters is *how* and not *when* you die. I don't pity the weary men who have attained their eternal rest on the shell-furrowed battle field. 'They went West' in their supreme moment. No, the men I pity are the slackers, those who could not hear the clear call of duty and whose consciences will grow more flabby every day. With the brutal roar of the first Prussian gun, the cry came to the civilized world, 'Follow thou Me,' just as truly as it did in Palestine." Men went to their Calvary singing

their merry song, but they were a devoted band, for their spirit was equal to that of any Christian martyr on the sands of a Roman Arena and their epitaph must be "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Now, when we compare all that we have said with our text what a wonderful harmony is here! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Such a one has, we may say, exceeded the standard of our text, for his love for his neighbour has been greater than for himself, *for he has given up his life that he may live.*

So we learn that resistance to crime and brutality is not only permitted but demanded, as we have said, Christ tells us that "we are his witnesses" for truth and righteousness. We all have taken our oaths of allegiance to his cause, have sworn to fight against sin, the world, and the devil, unto our life's end and when did "the world, the flesh and the devil" more aggressively reveal itself than by those who have opened the very mouth of Hell this day? They stand side by side with the old time enemies of God and His Kingdom, for their trust is in Satan's sword and his spear, therefore their cause cannot prosper, they are not only the enemies of God but they are the enemies of the whole civilized world. Neither peace nor liberty nor justice, nor truth, nor righteousness can remain to bless the earth until this blot on human life is removed, till this foul cancer is cut from the body of the race.

There can be no spirit of brotherhood in the world as long as the spirit of German rule is allowed to exist; no love toward our neighbour, until the Kaiser is crushed. We do not, as Christian people, hate Germany, but we cannot but hate their sin. Therefore, all maudlin talk of non-resistance is absolutely out of court, for the whole world is face to face with the one thing which is manifest,—that at the present moment Germany is a criminal nation. It is Germany and Germany alone that is responsible for the war. It is Germany that has been guilty of deliberate crimes against humanity, of premeditated outrages against the laws of civilization. It is Germany that mocked and scourged and crucified all Christendom. What place, then, we may ask can there be for any softness or neutrality in reckoning with such a nation?

God, I believe, has placed the surgeon's knife in the hands of the Christian nations to cut out this cancer, as Christ said of old "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" and as God said of the apostate king of Judah "as I live, though Coniah King of Judah were a signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence and I will give thee into the hands of them that seek thy life and into the hands of them that thou fearest." So, if we have the love of our neighbour in our hearts, there is but one thing for us to do, one thing that should centre our energies,—to cut down this "strong man armed" like his great prototypes indeed strong, but with the leader-

ship of God we must take from him his armour in which he trusts, and divide the spoil for the welfare of the world. The safety of Europe demands it. The peace of the world demands it. The civilization of mankind demands it, and we may not hesitate to believe that it is the will of God.

XII

THE LORD OF BATTLES

A tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, the Lord of Hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

IS. XIII, 4

THERE are two kinds of optimism in the world. There is the optimism of the man who builds his house on the sand, who trusts to the strength of his own arm, who strikes boldly, yet who has neither faith, nor hearing, nor foresight, who takes no note of the guiding principles of life, and blindly keeps his spirits up simply by ignoring facts, and turning a deaf ear to the warning notes of threatening danger. So he presses on in the path of his determined purpose, and is willing to violate truth and justice and trample on the rights of others and the claims of kindred and brotherhood. Aye, at times like the present, he scruples not, if need be, to wade through rivers of blood and carnage to satisfy his lust of power and hunger of conquest. There can be no optimism more base than this, nor one more surely destined to ruin and destruction, for "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

The other kind of optimism is that of the man

who believes in God with all his heart, believes, whate'er betides that God not only rules, but must rule over the kingdoms of men. "Whom He wills, He sets up; whom He wills, He puts down." Such a one realizes his stewardship, that he, whatever may be his power or his might is but an instrument in the hands of God whose designs are being carried out through the means of human endeavor. Such a man feels himself a part of a divine order, feels and knows that "in due time he shall reap if he faint not," that truth must triumph, and right will come uppermost. He therefore works cheerfully and persistently, even through the greatest perils and darkest days, through weal and woe, for that which *must be*,—a glorious end. In short, joy or sorrow, sickness or health, storm or sunshine, peace or war, are in a sense, one to him; all are alike parts of the same great purpose that is "shaping our ends, rough hew how we will."

No one who has any true knowledge of life and its eternal conditions, can fail to see the insolence and blind folly and manifest weakness of the one, and the fitness and beauty and majesty and invincible might, of the other kind of optimist. For since God rules and must rule over the kingdoms of men, a rule, moreover, which must in the end prevail, we see that the optimism of faith in Him, must lift us above all the ebbings and flowings of human life. Kings sit high, but there is one who sits higher, one who never abdicates His throne. The most haughty

Emperor that ever resisted His will, is to Him less than nothing, his mighty dreadnaughts are as a vapor, his armed host, as fuel for His fire. In the end His cause must triumph, for it is not man, but "the Lord of Hosts that mustereth the battle."

This most surely is the kind of faith that we need at this hour, for it is no longer the faith of the day or the hour of prosperity we need, but that of the night, of the storm, and of the battle's wild alarm; for the olive branch of peace of days that are passed, to which so many looked, and hoped would be our permanent possession, has, by treacherous hands, been rudely plucked away and exchanged for the firebrand of war.

Yes, there is being enacted this day, the greatest struggle of the world's history, for it comprises the greater part of the civilized world. It is a veritable reproduction of the prophet's vision, "a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together." Wantonly and deliberately, and with most treacherous and bloody purpose of heart, has the Kaiser plunged his sword into the heart of civilization; the whole world must pay the penalty of his cruel madness. We may say that he stands alone this day as an object of execration in the eyes of the civilized world, as an unscrupulous violator of the most solemn treaties, as an oppressor of the weak. As a proud and insolent usurper, he sweeps his devastating hosts through peaceful, treaty-protected countries bringing into them the horrid

din of war, turning prosperous fields into ruined heaps, and spreading havoc and desolation everywhere. Yes, this bloodthirsty autocrat hesitates not to put a match to the powder magazines of the greatest nations of the earth, filling well nigh the whole hemisphere with the boom of cannon, spreading their windrows of death and wholesale human slaughter mingled with the groans and tears of the widow and the orphan, causing at the same time the vast ruin of property, the devastation of countries, and the wreckage of nations. Yes, all this ruthless carnage and world-wide havoc, all this setting back of the progress of the world, the tide of man's material development, "ten degrees backward;" for *what*? Why, forsooth that Kaiser William may have solace for his wounded dignity, and that the German people may satisfy their greed of conquest, and have a wider range for their tyranny and flaunt the power of their insolence in the four corners of the earth. The emperor of the German nation may be emulating the role of the Napoleon of the twentieth century; if so, we would bid him remember Waterloo and the prison walls of Elba.

The awful menace of the hour is most appalling, and the final issues to the world are entirely beyond the grasp of human comprehension, the only thing we can do, and this we can do with unfailing confidence, is to fall back on first principles,—that the God of battles keeps watch and guard, and that "the Lord of hosts

mustereth the host of the battle. We may be assured that there is a divine purpose in it all, that He is teaching some lesson that the kingdoms of the world need. The first thought which comes to us with regard to this need is to ask, may it not be His way of compelling peace?

For centuries the world has been *talking* of peace, has been building its peace palaces, has been summoning its peace conferences and proposing the settlement of all national differences by peaceful arbitration, has been proposing with much apparent sincerity the disarmament of the nations. Yes, but what were they doing at this same hour? They were spending untold billions to increase their dreadnaughts, and to multiply their engines of war by land and sea. Yes, they were employing the very air we breathe to render more terrible the weapons of destruction. Can we not, then, believe that we see the hand of God in this sifting of the nations, that He is thereby *compelling peace*? For indeed this very barbarism of the nations is defeating itself, since it has been said by one of great military statesmen of England, speaking of the future possibilities of armed air-ships in time of war, that the time is not distant when the dreadnaught will be obsolete, and for purposes of war be outclassed as utterly useless, as unable to guard against the more deadly influence of the air-ship, the submarine, and the sunken mine. May this then not do something towards compelling peace, by teaching men the utter folly of present systems of warfare

and the criminal expenditure which its maintenance demands? There must surely be an end to this barbarous rivalry of the nations to outdo each other in military or naval power; for if it increases, it will simply wellnigh exhaust the energies of the world, and paralyze our industries to maintain them in times of peace, let alone times of war.

If peace, then, be one of the results of this cruel, shameless war, it will, we may almost say, be worth its cost. It would atone for much of its awful sacrifice of life and treasure; for there is nothing that the world needs and the greater part of the world desires, than peace. It is certainly true of the English-speaking world. Edward the *Peacemaker* was and is England's boast, and had it not been for William the War Maker, we would not have today, this grim, dark, ugly spectre of war, frowning and rendering void the years of tireless consecrated agitation for universal peace. It is indeed a terrible reproach on the Christian world that after two thousand years of Christian teaching, the teaching of Him who came to bring peace and good will to men, that we see today millions of professing Christians, banded together to practice the most open violation of the very foundation of Christianity, to let loose the most barbarous methods of violence to kill and destroy their fellow Christians.

Surely a most terrible recompense must sooner or later, be required from those who were the instigators of this wicked and wanton catastrophe.

This leads us to notice another end and purpose which we sincerely hope may be seen as the work of God in this great war,—the humbling to the very dust, of the insolent arrogance of the German king and nation. For a generation past, Germany has been a standing menace to the whole world and has, we know, been steadily preparing for the blow she has now struck under the feigned excuse of the Serbian plot. She is a nation of soldiers and believes only in methods of war. She has been so inflated with her military and naval strength that she was led to think that she could fight her way to being the first nation of the earth and above all, could bring the British nation to her feet. Indeed, so great is her pride and arrogance, that she seems to find her parallel in Babylon and her king of old when he said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" May it not be that Kaiser William needs to learn something of what Nebuchadnezzar was taught, that the Most High and not Nebuchadnezzar rules over the kingdoms of men, and that his kingdom will sooner or later depart from him as from the king of old. These may or may not be some of the results of this war, but these are in the future. What of the present? It is today *War, war, war*. It is, therefore, of the living present of which we must think to any purpose, and prepare ourselves to meet it, like loyal sons of that grand old mother that gave us birth and has nurtured and

protected us in our infancy and indeed does it still even in our sturdy and vigorous manhood, when it takes two oceans to confine our shores. Yes, we must still look to "the granite walls of Albion" for protection from our enemies. Then most surely, her cause is our cause, and so when Britain is at war, we must look upon it in the same light, as if our own shores had been invaded and our liberties threatened—as indeed they are—by some insolent oppressor.

So we must go forth this day as loyal sons to fight for home and motherland. We have this great encouragement in sending our brave lads to fight our battles in being assured that our cause is just, Britain is really the *peacemaker*, therefore we have the greater hope of victory over those who have so wantonly and insolently desired to stamp out peace and liberty under the iron heel of Teutonic despotism. We may say that the whole world is on our side, there is no war of her great history in which she has had so many nations on her side and such universal sympathy, as in the present contest. We believe that the downfall of German militarism and the sundering of its power, would make a world rejoice, for it is in direct antagonism to the spirit of our age which desires liberty, union, brotherly love, fellowship, equal rights, and justice between man and man, which are the distinctive characteristics of British rule. Then we may say, God bless those who may be called to the high honor of the defence of our Royal Banner, where-

ever it floats and summons to battle. And may they take for their example the Belgian heroes who were ready to defend their neutrality at all costs, regarding their national honor above every material gain and spurning the infamous bargain by which the Germans sought to bribe them to remain mere spectators to this bartering of their freedom as a nation. No, to their immortal praise be it said, they flung the insult in the German's faces and told them that they would fight or die but yield never, for to yield would be to bow their necks to the hated German yoke. When such heroism is found inspiring so small a power that boldly faces the German hordes and bears the brunt of the first attack of that vast army, surely Britain's standing aside would be standing with Germany in her treacherous dealing.

So, too, of ourselves, when Belgium goes under fire for her freedom and the protection of Europe from German aggression, Canada should be by her side. May we not rejoice over that fervid note of loyalty which since the beginning of the war has rung out from every town and village and hamlet of our native land! Canada never has been backward in her response to the call to arms; may her response today, be brighter yet!

So much for our soldiers, but what of ourselves? What can we do? we that stay at home and only watch from afar. What can we do? Nothing, you say? Ah, we can do much; for we must remember that it is still "the Lord that mustereth the host of the battle." We remember that

beautiful picture of Moses holding up his hands in prayer in the fight against Amalek. We are told that when he kept his hands lifted up Israel prevailed, and when his hands grew weary Amalek prevailed. May this not encourage us to remember our brave lads in our daily prayer, that the Lord of Hosts should inspire their hearts to do noble deeds and bring honor to their native land, and remember that to fight for one's native country is noble; but to die for it is nobler still.

XIII

ON THE LORD'S SIDE

And Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the Lord's side; let him come unto me and he said unto them, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'Let every man put his sword by his side and consecrate himself to the Lord. Even every man upon his brother that God may bestow upon you a Blessing.'"

EX. XXXII, 26

THE words of our text were spoken during a great crisis in the history of God's people of old, for a panic of gross materialism suddenly had possessed them. Moses, the governor general commanding the hosts of Israel, had been summoned to the summit of Sinai for a silent communion with God, to receive at His hand instructions for the guidance of His people; yet, at this sacred hour in the midst of this most solemn occasion of communion with God, we are told of a general apostasy of the people, even Aaron the High Priest yielded to the fierce demand of the factious mob, that they might worship the Gods of earth. So they built themselves altars and brought their gifts and worshipped the golden calf which they had made and gave themselves to the unbridled worship of the creature; as we are told in the inspired record, "the people sat down to eat and rose up again to

play." Could we have in so few words a more perfect picture or a better description, for all time of those who give themselves to material servitude and the worship of the creature?

The mammon of unrighteousness has ever been and is today the great enemy of God's cause and the welfare of the race.

Indeed, does it not seem today as though once more in the history of the race that a great judgment had fallen upon God's people? and that the time had come, of which God himself has so clearly warned us,—His great sifting of the nations, when "all nations shall be gathered together in one fierce struggle of internecine warfare, when brother should fight against brother, and a man's foes should be they of his own household."

And it is most significant for us to notice that the coming of this day of blood, was fulfilled to God's people of old in the destruction of Jerusalem by the greatest militarists of the ancient world and the time of this inhuman sacrifice of life and treasure, was marked in a peculiar way; it was described as the "abomination of desolation set up in the Holy place," that is, when the Roman eagle, the symbol of power, should be seen in Jerusalem. The merciless cruelties inflicted by the Roman soldier, in this hour of terror, are almost beyond human speech to describe and never have been equalled by its inhuman ferocity in the records of men. Now since the war which ended in this destruction,

there never has been a war amongst nations, so absolutely inhuman, so cruel, with such violation of sacred pledges and the instincts of common humanity, so ingenious in multiplying engines of destruction and every possible device of the devil (yes, as though the time had come of which the prophet speaks when "hell had enlarged herself") as the struggle in which we are now engaged. It is most significant to note that the time of this blood and slaughter and ruthless destruction is marked again by the same symbol, of power, the German eagle, the "abomination of desolation," is set up once more in "the holy place" of God's Kingdom, His holy place is defiled by the ruthless heel of the Prussian tyrant.

Yes, the fields of God's vineyard run red with the blood of our sons. Their loyalty and their courage have made their names a praise in the earth, and their heroic deeds will be found inscribed on the deathless page of history, as the deeds of men who counted not the cost, nor their lives dear that freedom, truth, and justice might remain unto men. Yes, my friends, when the story of Ypres and Neuve Chappelle and Vimy Ridge is told, it will be known what the dauntless sons of Britain may do and dare. The men of Canada have proved themselves the worthy sons of their sires, they are truly, "chips off the old block," that sturdy oak of loyalist stock, that spread its branches out wide over this virgin soil. They were the brave pioneers of our race who put honor and love of country, above tem-

poral welfare and material gain and so left their wealth and comfortable homes to face in an alien land, the unknown hardships and perils of pioneer life. It is the same spirit we find in our sons today, of which, thank God, they are giving abundant proof at this hour, so that the curse of Meroz is not upon them for they have "come to the help of the Lord against the mighty." When we think not only of the sacrifices that have been made, the homes that have been made desolate, the blood that has been shed, but of the blood that must yet be shed and the awful sacrifices that must yet be made before this demon spirit of cruelty and despotism can be crushed, can we doubt the nobility of our sacrifice or the justness of our cause? Must we not believe that these are men whom God hath called? That they are not only heroes and patriots fighting for the welfare of our country, but they are as priests of God? Are they not as our text says, "consecrating themselves to the Lord," offering a sacrifice well pleasing unto Him? They are "filling up" as St. Paul says, "the sufferings of Christ" in their own bodies by the willing sacrifice of their own lives and the shedding of their own blood for the triumph of freedom and the redemption of men. Great Britain could have remained neutral in this war if she had been willing to have her shield of honor tarnished by seeing sacred treaties broken, feeble nations oppressed and their countries devastated, yet raised no hand to stay the oppressor. Yes,

truly she might have done this, but nations as well as men can do things that will brand them forever as ingrates and cowards. Had she stood aside in this great crisis—seen her friends hewn to pieces, just to satisfy the lust of an insolent tyrant, she would have gone down in the history of nations as a coward who for selfish reasons let her friends perish by her side. It was upon her honor and upon her idea of right between man and man that Britain and her colonies and last, but not least, the loyal sons of America stand today, and have ever stood, willing to pour out their blood to the last drop for the right and freedom of men. So let us thank God this day that however we may have fallen, whatever virtue we may have lost as a people or a nation, that we have not lost our honor nor the sense of its value. We have yet, thank God, sympathy for the oppressed. Whenever a nation (as powerful as it maybe) loses these, it is marked for death and decay. This has been the distinctive quality of Britain, the source of her strength, that both by honor and tradition she was bound to one thing, her history pledged her to it. All through Europe she has stood for the independence, the inviolable rights of small nations. If Germany, the recognized pirate of the nations, had been allowed without hindrance from Britain, she would have swept the French fleet from the seas, have captured all her coast towers and fortified them, she would have been within speaking distance of England's front door, she would have had Eng-

land and France at her feet, and been a terror and menace to the world. But England assumed her accustomed rôle among the nations and gathered as one man her "far-flung battle line" from the four corners of the earth to stand in the breach of death to stay the oppressor and give liberty to the oppressed.

Hence it is, then, that we and our brothers in many lands are pledged in an awful strife to carry it through at every cost. We dare not flinch nor play the coward by keeping back our sons, we dare not think of the future or what it may bring to us or what our future relations within the empire will be. This is not the time to think or talk about that. When the stake is for life and death, it is not the time to think of conditions and possible results. No, the first thing is to see this fight through at all costs and all hazards, to save the empire and do it in simple faith, with an honest heart, as men who feel that they have the honor of the world and truth of God to maintain. Neither we nor our country ever can be what we were before the advent of this war. If we loved our native land in the past, in our hours of ease and prosperity, it surely appeals to us more in times of menace and of danger. In the days of peace and progress when every peaceful industry was booming and the tide of plenty was at our gates, that was not our real testing time; but more our time of peril, in the slacking of our moral virtues and the loosening of our manhood. But when the hour of danger comes and the call to stand to arms

is heard, when the ruthless foe is at our gates, it is then that every man braces himself for action, his blood runs fast, and his spirit is fired. He is ready to consecrate himself by noble action, or stand, if need be in the breach of death, to do or die for home and fatherland, for God and country and the mother that gave him birth. These are the precious times in a nation's history, for they prove the courage and loyalty of its people. The love of our country is ten times greater in times of peril than in times of peace.

Thus it comes, friends and brothers, that this great war is testing us, proving our manhood, giving us moral strength, by teaching us the great law of sacrifice, and self control, teaching us to lift up our thoughts above self and helping to put before us, lofty ideals and teaching us the Divine law that "no man liveth to himself."

It may be the very lesson that we most sorely need, here in Canada, at this very time when she is beginning to realize her vast possibilities of becoming one of the great nations of the earth, beholding as she does the priceless treasures that she holds within her borders that God has committed to her rule and government.

May not this war, then, as terrible as it is, be the means of building up and consolidating our empire, in saving us as a people from falling into the pit of materialism which has been the snare of nations in all time? Lest we too, like Israel of old, should give ourselves up (as we are ever prone to do) to the worship of the Golden Calf and

think because that we are "rich and plenteous with all manner of store," because our industries boom, because our fertile fields extend from ocean to ocean, that therefore we are a great people. Here let me warn you is our great and ever present peril, for here has ever been the insanity of the race. No, this surely is no test of our greatness for we might be and have all these things and they would be no better than a curse to us and to the world. We must, if we would live, set up a higher standard than this, if we would make our nation a praise in the earth, we must remember that the welfare and development of a country depends on *men* and not on *money* or lands. An empire is tested by the quality of the men and women who belong to the empire, their honesty, their sobriety, their self control, their courage and love of their fellowmen and their reverence for God, in a word, their manhood and womanhood.

This, let me tell you, is the great question that is being fought out this day on the battle-field of Europe, it is virtue versus vice, it is right against might, spiritual force versus material power. It is against the spirit of murderous Cain we are fighting this day. We may say, then, in spite of its nameless atrocity, it is in a very real sense a "holy war," for it is making men and women, and it has its moral victories. There is a deep spiritual force at work, bringing countless multitudes face to face with the verities of life and the things that count, that are really worth while. We are

going through a time of discipline and of conflict which is changing our character and making us of sterner stuff, which will enable us to stand on higher ground and in a loftier sphere, than we have hitherto lived. So, when this great crisis, this great sifting of the world is past, we may look for a new order of things, in this as well as other lands, which will lead, let us hope to a higher life and loftier purposes, not only of the nation but of the individual life. Those who are permitted to return from this Gethsemane of blood and passion, will bring back those qualities of firmness and sense of duty, which they have gained, which will influence their whole lives and be a blessing to the earth. While those who have fallen in the ranks of war, have followed in the way of the Cross in giving their lives for men and the uplifting of the nations.

XIV

ALL THINGS NEW

Behold I make all things new

REV. XXI, 5

THIS seems one of the most glorious promises ever made in Heaven or earth; for it was the great purpose of God, in sending His Son to take upon Him our flesh, to restore to humanity that perfect fullness and harmony with God's law, that sin and disobedience had so robbed and marred, and so to "make all things new." Yes, its glorious fulfillment was the ultimate purpose of God, but it was a purpose that was attainable only, through a process of law, that was in harmony with God's manner of dealing with man, which was that of co-operation. God would do nothing without man, man must be a fellow helper. Omnipotence, human effort, must go hand in hand, or God's purpose for the world could not be fulfilled. Though the fulfillment was sure, it depended on human conditions. This new heavens and new earth could be only the out-come of *love*. When men learned to love one another, then only it might be; for love was the fulfilling of the law, both human and divine. Since this, then, is the law of God, can we wonder that the fulfillment of this divine promise has

been hitherto postponed? When we look down on this blood-stained old earth and think of its awful tale of treachery and wrong, of its reigns of cruelty and injustice in the past; think too of the history of the Church herself, what she has done in the name of Him who came to bring peace on earth and love towards men! Yet through her pride and intolerance, she has used almost every engine of evil, has employed the stake and the block and the guillotine to enforce her principles! Where we may ask can love be found in this scene of blood? Or how can we look for this blessing today when we look abroad over the earth to see it deluged with the blood of the slain, see Christian nations with satanic fury, struggling for the mastery and thirsting for their brothers' blood.

But since we know that God does all things well, and that He ever works for the good of His creatures, may not this world-wide struggle for truth and justice, be in His hands, the very means by which He would hasten this restored order and make all things new? Can we think it possible that this blood which has been shed as a willing sacrifice for the freedom and welfare of the world be shed in vain? Must not it tend to open the eyes of the world to real things, to things that last and teach them that there are things that are more valuable than lust of possession and greed of conquest? Must not also the patience and endurance, the fortitude and self sacrifice which this war has developed, leave its impression on the minds and thoughts, not only of those who

have taken part in this struggle, but on the great mass of those who have had the example of this heroism brought home to them?

We must never forget that love *is* the only thing that *is*, the one thing that does not pass away, it never faileth, it is indeed the one great force in human life, it is the fulcrum that moves the world; therefore no good can come to man permanently except through love, but here we are met with a fundamental law, which is that love and sacrifice go hand in hand and cannot be put asunder. Where love is, there is the spirit of sacrifice. Sacrifice is the proof of love, and it has no other proof. This proclaims union with God, for God is love. But to be the love of God, it must be all-embracing. The love that centres in self is not of God, but of the devil; for we are told that "he who loveth not his brother, abideth in death," that "he who saith he loves God, and does not love his brother is a liar." Christ came not to destroy but to fulfill the ancient law by bringing to the world the vitalizing principle which should transform it, and make it capable of growth toward that which God meant it to be. Christ brought to the world the life of God which is love, and therefore it is love alone that is able permanently to subdue the world. God is moving the world today as he did when He sent His only Son to redeem it, but it can only be redeemed in God's way which is the way of love. Just here, has been the colossal mistake of the ages, man has endeavored to subdue it by *force*, and to estab-

lish the principle that might is right, and it has cost the world untold sums of money and rivers of blood to learn the sin of this devilish deceit. But the greatest of all sins has been, that it is not only the nations that have sinned in this respect, but the Church herself has been caught in this snare in that she has attempted to sit on the throne of the universe and call herself the ruler of the nations and make all men bow to her imperial ruling. She too in the past has maintained that might is right, and for love, has substituted rigid discipline and compulsory obedience to ecclesiastical laws. This unbending and unchristian rule of the Church prepared the way not for union and brotherhood but for schism and discord, so religious sects and parties multiplied upon the face of the earth, and the unity of the Church was broken up into contending factions, each like the nations, striving for the mastery. So it was that the spirit of Christ—that of love and brotherhood—became well nigh banished from the earth and has brought untold evils in its train, the spirit of selfish isolation has been our curse. Hence it is that though the church today may have the “form of godliness,” she lacks the power.

In truth we have been half Christians, not really Christians at all, in that we lacked the only spirit that can make us Christians that is,—love.

The Church’s failure in this respect has had its influence upon the nations, in that not having taken Christ’s standard for herself, as a Church, it was easy for men to think that our Lord did not

intend His new law to apply to the nations, and the nations were only too ready to accept the teaching of the Church in this respect.

The sin of the Church in this way, has been the sin of the nations, sowing its seed of evil in the hearts of men, and increasing in power and influence as the generations pass. It has brought to us its recompense this day. It has turned Europe into a den of wild beasts, and has opened the eyes of the world to what a national desire for self-aggrandizement and lust for power and might, leads to, anarchy and blood-shed and every evil work. If the handful of national diplomats and insane leaders, who brought on this horrible slaughter through their insistent greed and national selfishness, had met together in earnest effort to see how the law of love could solve the problem, who can doubt that God would have shown them the way? But through ignoring this divine principle, these Hunnish Junkerists have set back the tide of progress, not only in our own land, but in the whole world; unless it may be that through all the black smoke and horrid fires of this dreadful holocaust, God in His wondrous dealing is purging the earth, and through its cleansing power may "make all things new."

There can be no doubt to any thinking mind that vast issues are before us at this hour. As God said to His people of old, "Behold, I call heaven and earth to witness that I have set before you life and death, therefore choose life, that thou and thy people may live."

The question then is, are we really to get a new start after all this? If so, let us remember that the upward trend must begin with ourselves, we must "plant and water" if God would give the increase, for though we are nothing without God, yet God will do nothing without us.

If then, a new life is to open out on the world through this terrible baptism of fire, we must take heed that the new life is in us. If there is really to be a "new Heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness," we ourselves must prepare the way.

And ought we not to begin with the Church, and ask ourselves is there to be a new Church? Can the evil dragon of schism be slain? Can the long history of misunderstanding and bitterness be done away? Can the great wounds in the body be healed, the great gulfs of separation be bridged over? Aye, can the indifference and the dullness and the sloth like hideous bats be frightened out of the darkness and the whole Church make a new start in the broad light of the full-orbed day?

Let us be assured that it is not *uniformity* but *unity* and love and fellowship that the world needs this day,—one united band of Christian workers.

The glory of the Church of England is her comprehensiveness, the liberty that she extends to her members. She holds that truth is so vast, so deep in its wonderful unfoldings, that no single mind can grasp it in its fullness. So long, therefore, as we are at one with regard to its grand

foundations, there may be liberty granted in the working out of these necessary principles. For what, we may ask, is comprehensiveness, but the manifestation of Love? The love which in the deepest humility recognizes that perhaps the finite human mind may not wholly understand the infinity of truth, and that those from we differ, may perchance know more of truth, than the noise and heat of controversy permits us to perceive.

So in the Church, if we really loved each other, as Christ would have us do, we would learn the value of a wide vision and learn to put ourselves in our brother's place, and try to understand his conditions and so change our point of view. We are so bound up in the straight-jacket of individual opinion, tied hand and foot in the "mint, anise and cumin" of non-essentials of mere ecclesiastical tradition and in the logical letter of the law, that we disturb the unity and harmony of the Church by our denunciation of each other.

Here we are false to the very principles of the Church which prescribes "unity in essentials, liberty in non-essentials and charity in all things."

We must remember, too, that our faith is not built on logic, but on love; logic is human and finite and useful only when dealing with finite matters. It is often worse than useless and an absolute hindrance spiritually, because from its very nature it cannot distinguish between the finite and the infinite.

Logic, the desire to measure the truth of God,

in the balances of human reason, has been the adder's poison at the root of our ecclesiastical differences. It has no power to comprehend faith in mysteries, nor to understand things that appear contrary to human reason, seeming paradoxes, of which the word of God is full.

Faith in that which is seen only, is not faith in its true sense, for it is of "the earth, earthy." It is the great joy and privilege of the Christian to believe where he cannot see.

Yes, *love* is all embracing, it has no bounds nor limits, it sweeps earth and heaven in its mighty grasp, "perfect love casteth out fear."

Unity, then, is what we need,—unity more than uniformity. The Church had uniformity for 1500 years, and it wrought one of the worst evils that ever have come upon the Christian world, and has done more than anything else to strangle its missionary work, sow the seeds of discord amongst men. We may have real Christian unity without uniformity; "there are diversities of gifts but the same spirit, and there are differences of ministries but the same Lord, and there are diversities of operations but the same God, which worketh all in all." Yes, as the apostle tells us "the body is one, yet it hath many members," each has its office to perform for the health and vigor of the body.

And in this divine parable given to us showing to us the true life of the church of God, is it not worthy our notice that the apostle warns us of something that we are apt to forget,—the im-

portance of the unseen agencies of the body, when he tells us "that those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, have the more abundant honor," those members of the body, which "seem to be feeble are necessary" that there should be no schism in the body.

God reveals His truth in diverse ways and gives talents to each, to be used in furthering His work, "every man according to his several ability" and it is not the form in which this talent is given, but the use of the talent that is of the most extreme importance.

Let unity, then, be our watchword today. This has been the great truth which has been brought before the eyes of the whole world in this vast turmoil of the nations, unity has been and is their great strength. All creeds and colors, races and nations have been welded into one body, standing together, shoulder to shoulder, against one common foe, that would crush love out of the world, a power that has proved itself more degraded than the unspeakable Turk. These men have fought together, they have bled together, they have died together and have been buried in one common grave, the symbol of our common faith has marked their blessed resting place.

The question for the Christian Church is, can we look on this wondrous object lesson of unity, and still continue to emphasize our differences and refuse to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Christian brothers in this great crisis of the world's history, when God is opening such

a great door as has not been opened in all time, for the redemption of the world, and the fulfilling of His work. Shall we not strive in every possible way, to make the world see that we believe in the unity of the Church, and recognize that we are not sufficient of ourselves or in ourselves, that we need the help of all our brethren, of whatsoever name, to maintain that unity that shall convince the world of the need of Christ.

Indeed, it may be that we need their help for a more complete vision of Him, that we may see the whole truth of Him who came "to be the light of every man that cometh into the world" and is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" to every creature that He hath made.

XV

PEACE THROUGH THE SWORD

CHRISTMAS

Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth. I am not come to send peace but a sword.

MATT. X, 34

HOW these words, at first sight, seem to jar as a horrid discord in the harmony of our Christmas-tide! and yet we know they came from the lips of Him, who was and is the Prince of Peace, whom the heavenly host proclaimed as bringing "peace and good will to all people." The word and thought of Peace, we find continually on the lip and in the mind of Christ. Indeed, He seems to look upon it as man's highest gift, his chief attainment.

Before He ascended in triumph to His Father, His final gift to His disciples was that of peace, His parting benediction was accompanied with the thrice-bestowed blessing of peace.

But lest they should mistake the nature of the blessing, He goes on to tell them the kind of peace of which He spake. It was not a peace of body (for that might bring them a curse and not a blessing) it was a peace of soul. His peace, "My

peace I give unto you." He goes on further to tell them that it was a gift that the world could neither give nor take away. It was something that He alone could impart, so He says, "My peace I give unto you not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Therefore, "let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world."

In these great words of the Divine Peacemaker, the words of our text seem to unfold themselves and give light to their meaning, in that they do not refer to a condition of the body, but to a condition of the soul. It is not an earthly gift but a heavenly one.

In the word *tribulation* of which He tells them, we get the first gleam of the sword. We hear the din of warfare, the clash of arms, of putting on "the whole armor" and fighting "the good fight" of faith, if we would obtain the peace that Christ came to bring this day. Does it not seem almost a mockery and a sort of cruel irony to talk of peace when we look on the battle-scarred fields of France and Belgium this day and see what we may call the slaughter house of Christian nations? Are we not almost tempted to think, if not to say, that the Christian religion has (as its adversaries declare) been weighed in the balance and been found wanting? For are not its fundamental principles discredited, proved valueless to guide and govern the lives of men? We may say "can it be that Christian nations are slaughtering one

another thus?" "No," we answer, "it is not possible, it is because they are not Christians that it becomes possible, it is because men have borne the words of Christ on their lips, while they have cherished the spirit of evil in their hearts."

This war, with all its staggering horrors, gives evidence simply to the depths to which national selfishness can descend, unchecked by the love of Christ. As a great writer has said "war has one virtue, it reveals what is in men, it clears the air of hypocrisy, it takes the sword from the scabbard, and flashes the savage weapons we have been hiding."

We like to believe in our own sufficiency, that so long as our churches and missions are flourishing, and our Church membership is increasing, we are very apt to imagine that all is right, as it appears on the surface, but these violent outbursts of war and destruction, show us how the spirit of paganism is still in the heart of the nation. However much it hurts, therefore, we must face the horrid truth that civilization never has been Christian for the universally accepted maxim of the most enlightened nations hitherto has been, "If you would labor for peace, prepare for war." Now the principle of this is first and last pure militarism. Hence it is that militarism, in one form or another, has been the guiding principle of the nations. Germany has only been the most powerful exponent and has the sincerity and unblushing boldness to write it large on her banners before the world as the acknowledged principle

of her nation's struggle. Christians were not shocked at the presence of this hidden spirit till the tide of war broke out and began to flow, and the blood of our own people began to crimson the ground, when everybody is ready to ask, with righteous indignation, "Who is responsible for this war, this inhuman carnage?" We believe that the only true answer to this question is "the common greed of the nations is responsible for it, of which Germany is the most pronounced exponent." She alone, has the brutality to act out her pagan creed, that "Might is right" and so demands what the power of the sword can win; the awful scenes on which we are compelled to gaze this day, are but the most perfect expression of this creed that the world ever has seen. This war, then, is the awful punishment of the world's sin of covetousness, and it is only the nation that is without this sin that can point the finger of scorn and cast the first stone,—the burden of this sin is on the conscience of the nations. Here, then, is the explanation of our text, Christ the Prince of Peace, with His prophetic vision looked down the lapse of ages and saw the crimson stream of blood that would stain the history of men, before "His peace" could dominate the earth, and the true progress of the nations could be obtained, when men would "beat their swords into plough shares and their spears into pruning hooks, neither should they learn war any more." Let us not think, then, for one moment that Christianity has failed, and that this war has come

because it has failed. No, it has come because the Christian nations have failed to be Christians. May we not go further and say, that it is the indelible proof of Christianity, in that it is a hideous object lesson to the whole world of the final results of selfishness and materialism, when they are followed as the guiding principles of life, of the ruin and desolation that comes to a man or a nation when the principles of love and brotherhood are forgotten.

We must remember that the kingdom of Jesus Christ is not only a kingdom upon earth of peace, but a kingdom to be established by peaceful methods and means. It was thought by some who imagined that they read aright the signs of the times, that this time was even now dawning upon the earth, since so many had so labored for peace, that so strong a peace sentiment had been created and very widely spread; so much so, indeed, that congresses, parliaments, kings and statesmen recognized and felt it, a thing to be desired above all things. Treaties were made, societies formed, and courts established in the interests of peace. It seemed that the golden age had come or was about to come in the near future. War, at all events, among Christian nations seemed a thing almost impossible. Yes, so we dreamed and hoped and ventured to believe, till the falsity and adder's poison in the hearts of the German rulers were revealed, when like a thunder crash, the sound of tumult was heard, and the most colossal war in the history

of the world was begun, the most solemn treaties were as nothing, war was at our gates, a midnight darkness of ruin and desolation overshadowed one of the most beautiful and prosperous portions of the earth. Its best possessions, its artistic treasures, its choicest works of art, were pillaged and destroyed and worst of all, the homes of its innocent and peaceful people, were violated,—while murder and the barbarism of the savage ruled the hour, till the whole world stood aghast at the atrocities committed.

And what, we may ask, is the lesson we learn from the daily records we receive of the horrors of this present war? It is surely a fearful object lesson to the whole world of the result of men's trusting to the power of the sword. The principle of the arbitrament of war has been revealed in all its hideous reality before the eyes of the assembled nations of the world. Christ came to bring us peace, but peace can come only where there are conditions of peace, and men must be first taught to desire these conditions, before the mantle of peace can rest upon the earth.

So we often require to be shown the anguish and the bitterness, the awful ruin and waste and the unutterable barbarity of war, before we can be driven to stretch out our hands and offer up our prayers for the love and union and brotherhood that Christ came to bring. For we must remember that Christ was born, not only to be our Saviour, but also to be our Judge. In every event happening in the world, He comes to us as

our Saviour or our Judge; as St. James says, "Whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not of your lusts and your pleasures?" "Ye fight and war," he says, "and have not because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it in your pleasures." These wars and tumults are signs of God's merciful judgments. So these awful happenings, are intended to be as advents of Christ to the world. As God says through the mouth of His prophet, Isaiah, "When Thy judgments are upon the earth, then will men learn righteousness." Great struggles and great catastrophes, are to the eye of faith, instruments in His hands, who remaineth forever King of His people. If we are then Christian people, we should be ready in a humble and teachable way, to learn and profit by the discipline which God is sending upon us this day. We remember the battle cry of the great fore-runner of Christ; it was "repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven draweth nigh." So today, John the Baptist must come before Christ, that is, the sword of discipline and humiliation must come before the peace of which the angels sang on the first Christmas morn, can come upon the earth. We must be very blind if we do not see that this great crisis, may be the fore-runner of a time of great spiritual blessing to the world, but especially to the English speaking race which we believe form together the van-guard of civilization. So it is a day of great opportunity to enable us to see more clearly the "things that belong to our peace."

For we, as Christians must believe that for ourselves as for those of our motherland, our greatest gift, our best treasure is our knowledge of Christ. For that which we owe to Him has been and is today the mainspring of our freedom and progress, the secret of our moral growth and the foundation of our strength as a nation. If, therefore, we as a people and nation are to keep and maintain a position among the nations, it is to be done, not by naval or military strength, not by dreadnaughts nor aeroplanes, nor military resources of any kind, but by spiritual life and power drawn from Him who was and is the Prince of Peace.

Never before in the history of men were there such wonderful opportunities for spreading the gospel of peace and good will to the world, as there are this day; for a door that is wide and effectual is opened in all the world, the great war, in a very real sense, has awakened the brotherhood of the nations, it has stirred their sympathy in the maintenance of freedom, truth, and justice by the endeavor they have made to put down the spirit of pride and arrogance and greed and violence and cruel oppression. The loving sons of the great motherland have come from the four corners of the earth, the United States of America has marshalled her mighty engines of war and summoned her loyal sons to stand by Britain and her allies in their great struggle for righteousness. This will strengthen the bonds that unite the English speaking race and further the efforts

which are being made to insure the peace of the world and bring the Gospel of peace to all nations. We must remember that the birth of Christ was a beginning and not an ending. It was a beginning of cross-bearing and of much tribulation, of many sorrows, many burdens to be borne and this because it was the promise of those spiritual, eternal joys, into which men enter only through the gate of trial and suffering. The great gifts of peace and love cannot be received till the spirit is prepared to receive them. "Peace on earth" came to the world 1900 years ago, but God cannot force peace till the world is ready to receive it. It will be ours only when we establish justice and righteousness amongst men, it can come to us only when we have learned where our strength is found. Then will our peace come like a river. After the storm will come the calm, the "haven where we would be." A story is told of a traveller being in one of the historic bell-towers of stricken Belgium while the chimes were being rung. The ringers plied their vigorous strokes and there thundered forth peal after peal, a perfect babble of unmeaning sounds which seemed naught but a bellowing crash of deafening discords; yet as the wonderful sound floated out over the peaceful valley it seemed like a benison from on high and blended into the soft notes of an exquisite melody. It rolled out its beautiful harmony as though it might be the rapture of an angel's song chanting "Peace and good will toward men," for it was "Peace, perfect peace, o'er this dark world of sin. The blood of Jesus whispers peace within."

In this great struggle, the great question is whether the Gospel of the Great Peace Giver shall dominate the earth; but may we not believe and hope and pray, that God will bring out of this chaos an abiding peace, even that "Peace of God which passeth all understanding."

XVI

VICTORY IN SEEMING DEFEAT

Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ, for they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore, rejoice ye Heavens and ye that dwell in them.

REV. XII, 10-12

IT is a most significant fact, and worthy our deepest thought, that the most jubilant and triumphant book of our Bible, is the Book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, though it is filled with woes and bitter tribulations; yet, through all there runs an irresistible note of gladness; till it seems like a great choral of jubilant praise rising up to the very throne of God. Yet that book was written, we know, in perhaps the very darkest hour of the Church's history, for the sword of persecution had just done its most cruel work, the sands of the Colosseum at Rome, had run red with Christian blood, and the insane lust of the monster Nero had loosened his hungry lions to satisfy his wanton cruelty on the bodies of Christians. A worse than Egyptian darkness had come upon God's Church which no doubt the beloved apostle had seen with his own eyes previous to his banishment to the isle of Patmos. Indeed, the whole

earth lay "in darkness and in the shadow of death;" the moral degradation of Rome, was beyond the power of words to describe. St. Paul in the first chapter of Romans, gives us an idea of the depths to which it had fallen. It seemed as though it had sounded the very depths of human depravity. Philanthropy was practically unknown. Chastity was not recognized. Truth and honor were things of the past, indeed, life was regarded as a game, a most brutal game at that. Yet, how significant it is for us to remember that in this most tragic hour, in the very midst of this hopeless chaos of human life, the eagle eye of the great apostle was able to look through the darkness, till he saw the light of a triumphant victory, he looked forward to that time when "a great multitude which no man could number," of all peoples, kingdoms and tongues should be gathered before the throne of God, giving "blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might unto our God forever and ever." No earthly darkness could cloud the glory of his sacred vision, of the final triumph of God's kingdom in the world. Hence his jubilant praise and never ceasing joy. It is interesting, as has been said, to notice that it was from this same book of Revelation, that Handel drew the inspiration for his greatest work, *The Hallelujah Chorus*, the greatest praise choral that ever was written. He, too, like St. John, looked forward to the final victory, and so lifted up his voice to shout in jubilant praise "Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!"

When we look over the troubled sea of human life today, we may believe that never since the days of St. John was there a more perfect parallel to the sickening barbarities of the days of Nero and the Huns of ancient history, than is revealed to us today in the unparalleled atrocities of the Neros and Huns of our day. Indeed, we have to transport ourselves in thought to the devastated fields of Belgium, think of its ruined homes, its martyred women, its butchered children, its poisoned wells, its ruined temples, to find conditions similar to those which drew forth the sublime visions of St. John. Indeed, we can imagine somewhat of his spirit throbbing in the breasts of a congregation of Belgians, gathered in one of their half-demolished cathedrals, singing there, as an expression of their abiding faith, *The Hallelujah Chorus*. But the thing which is of the most supreme importance for us to notice is, that this jubilant vision of the apostle which was so vitally connected with the era of tragedy through which the Church was passing, was, he believed, one of its necessary *results*, in that "the great multitude which no man could number," were those who "had come out of great tribulation and had made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb." To the mere literalist, these words may have little meaning, but to those who interpret them spiritually, they are filled with the most intense significance. They tell of a most glorious interpretation, for this great number of which the apostle speaks, had not only listened with docility

and reverence to the teaching of Christ, seen His miracles of mercy, followed Him in His life of doing good to the poor, the ignorant, the suffering, and the outcast, but they had followed Him to the Cross, they had shared with Him the sacrifice of His life. This was, in the apostle's vision their supreme glory, in this unselfish suffering for others they had reached the very highest reward of human life. As he tells us himself in the words of Christ, "as He laid down His life for us, so should we lay down our lives for the brethren," which brings to our minds that wonderful paradox of the Master, "He that saveth his life, shall lose it, but he that loseth his life, for my sake shall find it." Yes, as St. Paul says, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." It was the illumination of this "exceeding glory" that enabled him, as he says, to "rejoice with joy exceeding" to look out and beyond the things of time, to those things which shall be hereafter. Let us be assured that no greater blessing could come to us, and to the Church throughout the world, than that we could be imbued with this spirit of St. John, this day, that we could interpret the life of the twentieth century as St. John did the life of the first.

But alas, how great is our blindness! For, to many, there are no sounds but those of earth. There are no "mighty thunderings" from on high, no Heavenly voices speaking through the midnight; for they can see nothing but the deluge

of blood, nothing but death and slaughter, hear nothing but the shriek of shell, and roar of cannon. Their eyes are so dimmed and their ears are so deafened by the earthly aspects of the wondrous tragedy, that they have neither eyes to see nor ears to hear anything of the Heavenly Glory of this wondrous hour, this hour of supreme sacrifice, this great Calvary of the nations.

Yes, they see the wounded hands and feet of those who have been taken down from the cross, see the patients, wounded and torn, lying in the hospitals; but they do not see the glory of their sacrifice, not the true glory of the cause for which they suffered. They do not see the ministering hands of Christ in the devotion of the nurses, and that they too are bearing their cross of sacrifice. They feel, in thought, the physical pain of the men in the trenches, but not the joyful thrill and glory of their patriotism, the ecstasy of their courage, not the lofty spirit that animates their breasts. In a word, they can see all the wrath and the bitterness, the depravity and brutality which is seen; but they forget to look at the Divine side of the picture,—the love of country, the loyalty, the heroism, the self-sacrificing devotion to a great idea, and that faithfulness unto death that must give angels joy. Are we wrong, then, if we venture to trace a parallel between the Church in St. John's day and our own? Never, since St. John's day have the gates of Hell been so widely opened. Indeed, it would seem as though the words of the

ancient prophet had been fulfilled for us, and that "Hell had enlarged herself" so that an appendix must be added to the world's history of inhuman horrors, enacted in cold blood by a so-called Christian nation and led on by the Nero of our day.

But on the other hand, when in all history, since Christ died upon the cross, has there been such a glorious manifestation of His spirit? Think of the glorious sacrifices that have been offered up in His name! Even the so-called heathen nations have enrolled themselves as willing defenders of a sacred cause, have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Christian nations in shedding their blood for the life of the world, have poured out their willing sacrifices of men and money, that truth and righteousness might remain to bless the earth. When we see such a widespread manifestation of God's spirit working in the hearts of men, may we not believe that great things are being done whereof we may rejoice? May we not believe that Christ is speaking to us, and bidding us "lift up our heads for our redemption draweth nigh?" And should not our faith share in the jubilant vision of St. John that the work of Christ is being done and fulfilled in these latter days, in His own way,—through the *cross* and that "Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and of His Christ in that His servants have loved not their lives unto the death."

And may we not go further and continue our

parallel with the days of St. John? He looked on the glorious instances of martyrdom of his day as an outcome of the terrors with which they were surrounded and enabled them to sing their hymns of joy on the bloody sands of the Arena. So may we not believe today, that the very awful nature of the struggle, its ruthless barbarity, its manifest injustice, its open fraud, deceit and its heartless inhumanity had its effect in being a spur to the latent heroism of the men, lifted up their ideals, fired their blood to noble deeds, lifted them out the pit of indolent ease and self-indulgence, and planted their feet on the firm ground of a noble resolve of trying to do something for others, if need be, to give their lives for home and country. So it is, that God has turned "the wrath of man to His own praise," and in a word, the words of the prophet have been fulfilled, "a nation has been born in a day" and this great cross of the nations has opened the gates of Heaven to unnumbered souls . . . Does it not seem, then, the question of a fool or a madman, when he looks at all this, to ask "is not Christianity a failure?" For never, in all its history, was it more gloriously triumphant, from a human standpoint, a more complete success. For if the cross is the symbol of Christ, and sacrifice and Christianity go hand in hand; then never before has so great a multitude of "all nations, kingdoms people, and tongues," been so eager to lay down their lives for their fellowmen.

Consider, too, what this great war has done to

break down the barriers between man and man, and to foster the cause of unity and brotherhood of men. Men have been drawn together, not only in outward form, by unity of purpose, but they have been the nobility of a noble idea, viz.: the struggle for truth and righteousness and liberty and brotherhood. These noble desires must leave an indelible stamp on their lives, and if they are spared to return, will, we believe, bring forth fruit in after years. This surely will help to prepare the world for the establishment of that reign of peace and good will, which Christ came to bring to all people when "the sword shall be beaten into plough shares and the spears into pruning hooks and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." And does this not bring to our minds the sublime utterance of Christ Himself, when He in prophetic vision, the final accomplishment of His great work, and exclaimed, "If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me." May not the noble sacrifices of today be in a sense the lifting up of Christ in the eyes of the world, and teaching them that Christ is their life, their only life, and that it is in Him alone that all nations are to be blessed that He may see the great travail of His soul and be satisfied and that as St. John says, the "Heavens may rejoice and all that dwell in them."

XVII

QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.

ISAIAH XXX, 15

NEVER since the Gospel was first given to the world has there been such need for us to proclaim its fundamental truths as Christians and as believers in the spiritual evolution of man and the ultimate triumph of good in the world. There are always certain truths that we must firmly grasp to steady us in times of peril in the great rush of events if we would be saved from doubt and despair. The first truth is "that the Lord is King be the earth never so unquiet," and therefore because he is King, good always must come out of evil. Because of the divine life inherent in man, there is an irresistible force in humanity which always lifts us to a higher level, however stormy and persistent the downward pressure may be. The upward tendency may be long delayed to human eyes, the visible rebound may not occur even in a generation or within a century, but inevitably it comes as sure as the dawn follows the sunset, and for the same reason, namely: that a new light might shine upon the world. As the blast of the wind and

the storm on the tree-tops makes the roots expand and take a deeper grip on the underlying soil, so the bitter experiences of defeat and disaster are used to secure a finer foot-hold on permanent foundations of the things which cannot pass away, and so turn the eyes from the darkness of earth's securities to a brighter light and to ambitions which do not pass away. Hence, it comes that these very defeats and disasters are really intended to be messages of God, they represent the much tribulation which we are told that we need in order that we may enter into His Kingdom,—that is, submit ourselves to His Law and recognize His rule over the kingdoms of men. This is the only foundation that may not nor cannot be moved, for "other foundation can no man lay."

Since the world began men have tried to build apart from God, and Cain and his profane builders of the olden time were the pioneers of a mighty host. When in every age men have set out to make for themselves a name by building on material foundations, one after another they come to nought. Their tower of strength has fallen and buried them in their own confusion. God's people of old were wrecked on the rock of materialism; so too, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Spain and France in former days—though led on by the most skilled and efficient Generals the world has ever seen—have proved by their own destruction that it is "righteousness only that exalteth a nation."

But it is reserved to our own day to find a nation building or attempting to build on this rock of destruction which has been the ruin of nations in all time. Hence, we see that Germany today is following in the wake of a long line of nations that have vainly attempted to do an impossible thing, namely, to build up a nation on material foundations. She, although a professedly Christian nation, openly has cast aside her faith in Christian principles and asserted her belief in the invincible might of the mailed fist of her conquering legions. She practically owns no power separate from the sword, so it comes that she is the most powerful exponent of material might that the world has ever seen. She has marshalled her mighty hosts to prove to the world that she is mistress, and by the might of her own arm she is practically saying to the Christian Nations what Sennacherib said to God's people of old, "What confidence is this wherein thou trusteth?"

She is being weighed this day in the balances of God who never yet suffered his cause to fail or permitted evil in the end to triumph. It is He only who can bring good out of evil, light out of darkness, and order out of chaos. We may be well assured that out of what seems to us the barren waste of this hopeless destruction, the seething chaos of this terrible war, God is in his own way and in his own time working out an untold blessing for the world. After the storm, the calm; after the cloud, the sunshine; every-

thing is by inexorable law. It is not the Kaiser, let us remember, but the Lord God Almighty that still governs the earth. The pillar of cloud and fire still goes before God's chosen people, guiding them to the promised land. "Our little visions have their day, they have their day and cease to be, but thou, Oh Lord art more than they". *Time is our limit.* But God's designs sweep eternity in their mighty embrace, so we may rest secure in the darkest day and in the blackest night for God's arm "is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear." "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," for the Most High ruleth over the Kingdoms of men, though the very earth be moved for "His way is in the sea. His path in the great waters and His footsteps are not known" Here is the anchor of our life that never yet has moved in the history of the world, and it is lack of faith in God which is not only the curse of Germany but the curse of the world this day. It is, we believe, for this especially that we are being scourged in order that from this baptism of blood we may rise to a new life as a people and a nation.

We read that in the infancy of our race, the earth was so filled with violence, that God cleansed it with a flood and the purpose of his judgment ever has been as we are told "that men may learn righteousness." So let us be assured it is today; we have called ourselves a Christian nation, but the trouble is we have not

been Christians, in that we have worshipped something more than God. We practically have put our strength in things which began and ended on earth. In short, we have been thinking only of swelling our material resources by land and sea, multiplying our armies, building our dreadnaughts, strengthening our fortifications, and like the Babel builders of olden time, we have been endeavoring to build ourselves up a name in the midst of the earth as the most formidable nation of our time, while all the time the true weapons of our warfare were left rusting in the scabbard. The almonries of the Church were empty, its missions starved, the waste places of the earth were left uncared for. The great work which God had set before the Christian world was being strangled in its birth, "there was not strength to bring it forth." The things belonging to the only peace of the world were being fast hidden from its eyes and so, through God's mercy, a rude awakening *had to come*. Its awful intensity may tell us of the depth of our slumber; its resistless violence, of the stubbornness of our sin. We believe that through this awful carnage which is now sweeping over the earth, God is preparing great things for us "for which we may rejoice." He is restoring the life of the world by revealing to us its true strength, its abiding confidence. Mankind desired that which was seen and temporal, has put its trust in "reeking tube and iron shard." And God in his just judgment has given to us our own desire, but has shown to us the hellish nature of

materialism, the awful pit of degradation into which man may fall once separated from the restraining influences of the Christian faith. The object lesson has been so awful, demanding such terrific sacrifices of life and treasure, as to fill the whole world with a never-ceasing memory of its inhuman sacrilege. Mankind heretofore has tried to live under the profession of Christianity separated from its power,—that is, has separated its life from its ruling and has failed signally. Our Western civilization has been built on the form of Godliness without its power, and now we are brought face to face with what seems its collapse and in imminent danger of appearing a spent force. We are driven, therefore, to seek for the cause, and we find that it is because the fundamental principles of Christian teaching have been left out. To get and to have and to hold for ourselves, have been to a great extent the basal truths of our religion, both as individuals and as nations.

We have come this day, then to a great crisis in our History as a Christian nation when we must study anew the great principles of our faith as revealed to us in the Sermon on the Mount concerning the brotherhood of the race, and that in the midst of our war-loving, self-seeking, hostile, and aggressive age there will be built a strong, generous, peace-loving humanity for whom peace will not be a beautiful theory, only, but a virtual necessity whose strength will be found in *quietness and confidence*. Up to this time, the cross and the sword have been entwined, and

material forces have been thought necessary for our spiritual as well as our temporal advancement. Now, let us hope and pray that undee the Providence of God we are about to cut the cord that binds the sword to the cross, and will try the developing of humanity without the aid of the instruments of barbarism and the cruel carnage of war. We must never forget that Christ imparted to His Church His own omnipotence and he declared that *all* power was committed unto Him. We must believe, therefore that Christ's gospel has the power to break down all barriers of nations and races and tongues. God only knows but it may be, then, that out of this present cruel carnage and murderous hatred, there will come a recognition of the folly and crime of thus arraying brother against brother and that the nations will take council one of another to promote good fellowship and a mutual understanding. War can be only where Christ is not; for where the spirit of Christ is, there must be unity and peace, so we must believe that the great power which is to unite man into one brotherhood is the Gospel of Christ. It is He only who can say, "Peace be still," to the troubled waters, and it may be to teach the world the recognition of this fact that the winds and the waves of this dread war are now threatening us with destruction to tell us that it is God and not man who rules over the kingdoms of men and that He has made all men of one blood so that in His Kingdom there shall be neither Teuton or

Slav, Latin or Anglo-Saxon, neither East nor West, North nor South, Jew nor Gentile; but all will be one in Christ Jesus "who is the Light that lighteneth everything that cometh into the world."

XVIII

HE THAT FINDETH HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT

He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

MATT. X, 39

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

COL. III, 3

I am dead" said an enthusiastic Frenchman to an American at the beginning of the war.

"Yes, I am dead and France is dead, in that we are ready to be offered. We are prepared to die that France may live." In one sense, this was a figure of speech, since he was still standing there in the flesh, yet in another it was a literal truth, for he had in spirit made the great sacrifice, he had in will and purpose offered up his life. He had laid it on the altar of his country, a willing sacrifice. When that death should come, was to him in one sense of no moment, or so far as his own will and intention were concerned, the man was already dead. The result of this mighty resolve, was a rapt enthusiasm, his individuality was lost, swallowed up in the intensity of a glorious ideal,—the freedom of his country and the welfare of the land that gave him birth. And

what, we may ask, has been the result of this sublime patriotism on the part of the French people? Why, that she has risen in the eyes of the whole world till she stands today amongst the greatest nations of the earth for the splendor of her heroism, the dash and elan of her troops and the unshrinking courage of her Commanders. In a word, France has by this sacrifice "found her soul." Yes, there has come such a transformation to the whole land that it is an astonishment to us all who behold it.

But this spirit of sacrifice has, thank God, not been confined to France. It has illuminated England, it has warmed and thrilled our own loved land, it has extended to the four corners of our great empire, it has lifted up the greater portion of the earth to ideals that are not of earth, to a love of truth and liberty that is dearer than life. It has been God's sifting of the nations, through which he has riddled out the chaff of materialism and blown it to the four winds, and garnered the pure grain of sacrifice to nurture the earth.

But here, let me remind you, that this is but a dramatic illustration of a law of our common life; for we know that no great success is ever attained till it is lifted up to the plane of sacrifice, till it is made an ideal to which everything else gives place. No great thing is ever done when it is made a side issue. It must be the one thing that engrosses our own chief thought and that, too, in such a way as to prepare us for sacrifice. We

must be willing to put aside our own ease, our own comfort, our own self-indulgence, and press on to the goal of our ambition, resolved to let nothing stand in the way of that which we have chosen as our life work. With this concentration of will and purpose, there is scarcely anything that we cannot attain. This is the reason that what we call our self-made men are so often the great men of our day,—because they have made some one thing the ruling ambition of their lives. They have put first things first, and have kept them there. They have mounted step by step, never turning aside to the right or to the left, but simply going on, surmounting every difficulty, learning wisdom by their mistakes; but rising higher and higher till victory is attained, till they sit on the seat of the mighty. Is this not the history of every life that has accomplished great things in this world of unceasing toil? Yes, “by the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” was, and is, life’s unalterable law. Let us be assured that we never can obtain bread that will nourish us in any other way, for it is the law of God.

St. Paul gives us the secret of his wonderful life, the watch-word of his success, when he tells us “This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before. I press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” He counted “all things but loss” that he might win Christ, and this is the sublime truth which Christ himself makes clear to us when He

says, "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it." This is one of the beautiful paradoxes that we find everywhere in Christ's teaching in which He would make the natural tell us of the spiritual and tell us of the real things,—those things that do not pass away. So here, He reminds us of the true life that only comes to us by a supreme effort and by the road of sacrifice.

How this truth is brought home to us and to the world this day in the cross-crowned fields of Flanders! How many lives have been saved by being lost? Plucked, no doubt, many of them, as brands from the burning,—from an empty and purposeless life to make a glorious adventure, to stand in the ranks of those who were fighting for truth and liberty and the crushing of tyranny and lust of power. Oh, how the whole world rings today with their noble deeds! Right royally have they filled out their noble quest. They have given their lives to save lives, and so have won a life eternal.

We are so bound to things of earth, so blinded with temporal things, we think so much of our *losses* that we forget our *gains*. We always are tempted to measure our blessings by earthly balances and judge of our success by the puny standards of men. May it not be possible that this war, terrible as it is, may have gathered more good grain into the garner of Heaven than a hundred years of peace? Why? Because it has been the means of saving so many lives, it has

put truth and righteousness before men as something to be fought for, it has aroused countless thousands to noble deeds, as enthusiasts in a great cause for which they have not hesitated to give their lives.

Here is the answer to those shallow minds who deem this war the deathblow to Christianity. It is the most glorious triumph that it has ever seen; it tells us how stern is the voice of love. It always demands first place, and the voice that expresses it is sacrifice. Here, then, we have seen what love of truth and righteousness mean to men. Like Mary of old, they have broken their precious box of alabaster at the Saviour's feet so that the fragrance has filled the earth. Aye, they have won the reward of that greater love of which the Master spake, those who have given their lives for men, so in losing their lives they have, in truth, found them, and have blessed the whole world by the nobility of their sacrifice. As it has been beautifully said, "The lives of such men dropped apparently into the stream of life are like stones into the stream at the building of a bridge,"—stones which one day will bear the great bridge over which a redeemed and reconciled humanity shall pass on its victorious way. Thus we see that the war, in spite of its appalling terrors, has brought with it an untold blessing; for it has taught the world the insecurity of temporal things, it has brought them face to face with life and death and with the things that shall be hereafter. It has, we believe, opened the gates

of Paradise to unnumbered souls and started them on their Heavenly way. Thus it comes that this sacrificial host have been, and are, unconsciously though it may be, among the greatest missionaries of time. They have taught the world that sacrifice is the law of life, that inaction means death, that we are pledged to unceasing labor, that the do-nothings are the get-nothings, that those who live only to consume, and think only of themselves *are the scabs of humanity and curse of the race.*

Another great blessing of the war has been to turn the tide of human things toward spiritual things. Material things have received a deadly blow. Men and women have become alarmed at living only for earth, because so many millions have been swept away. Their noble sons have been called Beyond the Veil in countless thousands, just when they were in their prime and vigor of manhood. What does it all mean? Has the God in whose hand our breath is, forgotten to be gracious, and does He shut up His loving kindness in displeasure? Can this be the end of all this matured vigor, this splendid heroism this undaunted courage, this enduring love even to death? Nay, my friends, it is more the beginning than the end. God could never allow this precious box of alabaster to be broken in vain; for He has entered into a life which is eternal, one of higher activities, of brighter visions of truth to an estate of more sanctified labor for God and humanity. God who had begun that good

work in Him on earth in the shedding of His blood for man, will now confirm it unto the end. So we see that the days in which we live, are as a great crucible in which God is proving men. They are being made to pass through the fire. The handwriting of materialism is written upon the wall, it has been weighed in the balances and has been found wanting: it is, we believe, of blessing, yet of trouble and of anguish and of grave responsibility. Yes, the days are grave; let our speech be grave too. God has drawn very nigh us and we to Him. It is His trumpet call to us to use all our gifts,—gifts of faith and hope and love, as fellow workers with God, in every department of life,—each in his own place, and in his own vocation—as our brave soldiers are doing—for the saving of the world.

Neither God nor the world has any use for sluggards,—for idlers in the vineyard. They are a blot and a disgrace wherever found, they are clogs and hindrances on every field. God has said to each one of us, “Go work this day in my vineyard.” We understand this well enough in our temporal life; we feel that there is nothing but defeat and failure for the man who refuses not only to labor but labor with a fixed resolve and is ready for any sacrifice that his work may demand. This, as we have seen, is the law of life,—if we would accomplish great things we must make it the ideal of our life, we must put faith and hope and confidence into our work and carry it on at every cost, even at times of life itself. It is such

men that have made their names renowned in the history of the world. These are the sacrifices that generations of men have made and are making this day, for even temporal rewards and the things that pass away. Can it be that eternal rewards, demand less labor?

God has no more use for traitors and slackers and do-nothings than our armies have today. Neither has He any use for those who, though they may have put on the King's colors, mark time or stand at ease. He wants men who are prepared to fight and, what is more, fight to a finish,—men who realize the sacred nature of their work and are prepared for sacrifice, ready to lose their lives that they may gain them. This is the spirit that is needed in our religion this day, that the Church of God may catch up some of the enthusiasm of our soldiers and share in the glory of their sacrifice. This surely is the spirit of our Master who died that we might live and bid us take our Cross and follow Him. An estate of dull, torpid inaction, a nerveless resting upon the things that have been done for us, is the curse of the Church this day. Let us remember that all that Christ has done for us will only serve for our condemnation, except so far as we make the fruits of His death and passion to be revealed in our individual lives through our diligent labor. God is omnipotent, as we know; yet He will do nothing by Himself, we must be fellow-laborers with Him if we would reap at the great day of His ingathering. Let us be assured that we take our

religion too easily. There is too much of the soft, goody-goody, nerveless pampering element in it; too much preaching of smooth things. We have not the courage of our convictions, so it has come to be a mere sickly sentiment lacking all enthusiasm and vital power. The popular idea of a Christian is the direct opposite of a soldier. It is a sad-faced, gloomy, timid, anaemic, irresolute sort of an individual who isolates himself from the world, who spends his time quoting scripture, groaning over the world's sin, and thinking only of his salvation. There is more hope for the profligate than for him. Such, we may rest assured, was not the religion of Jesus nor of His first followers. Such a religion never will conquer the world, for it lacks the force that is required to overcome evil, it lacks the true spirit of service, the spirit of sacrifice, the spirit of Him who said, "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he who loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

While these glorious sacrifices are being made for us, dare we stand idle in the market-place, and not be willing to take our part? The great premier of the British nation has told us, "The line which the British Empire holds against the Germans, is held by those who work on the land, as well as those who fight on land and sea." Now the importance of the economy and production of food is the great problem of the hour, this makes all manner of waste simply criminal. The soaring of prices, compel the most rigid economy.

Prohibition of all forms of indulgence meets us face to face, "a penny saved is a penny gained." But we can "do our bit" not only by saving food but by producing food. We are told that the king himself is served by the field. The farm is our most important asset, our nation's wealth is mostly derived from the forest and the field. Every business in our country is largely dependent on the produce of the field. We see, therefore, that our duty today, in this great crisis for all non-combatants, is food production. The waste places must be filled. This insistent call is coming from every district of the country, our great economists have spoken in clear tones warning us of alarming conditions concerning the food supply of the world, of which we should take diligent heed. If we would look for the victory of our cause, we must, as Lloyd George says, "hold our part of the line," by doing our utmost to increase the food supplies of the country this year.

Notwithstanding the shortage of labor, the high cost of necessary supplies, and the scarcity of seed, we believe, by a united and determined effort to make the best use of our unused acres and of the means at hand, a very large increase will take place. We that were brought up in the country know something of farming, so in every town and village, are men who can readily adapt themselves to farm work. Boys and even girls can do their part and emulate those who are doing this work in the motherland.

XIX

THE GIFT OF GIFTS

Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

I COR. XII, I

THERE just two standpoints from which civilization may be judged; one is the material, and the other is the spiritual; the seen and the unseen.

The bold materialist is never weary of parading his goods before our eyes, he glories in the wonders of his grand achievements. When we look around us today, we cannot but be amazed at the wonderful results of man's genius. Whether we look at "the heavens above, the earth beneath or the waters under the earth," there seems no limit to his daring adventure. The obstacles of time, space, and condition seem, in a measure, removed and made subject to his will, to be used as his purpose may direct. Indeed, man's achievements today seem the last word of human ingenuity. They are the extremes of that convenience which ministers to the comfort of the age, as though there were nothing more to be desired.

In this grand march of material development, we may say that one nation has taken the lead. No country upon the earth has kept pace with

Germany in the increase of her material power. The development of her industrial, scientific, and national resources, have been the wonder and admiration of the world. She is, indeed, the world's last word in materialism. She has, we may say, proved it to the hilt during the last generation, as the highest ambition of her people; yet what, we may ask, has been the result? Let the slaughter-house of Europe give the answer. Her materialism has hardened her heart to commit the most awful crime of the ages, to wage, without any just pretext, the most cruel and barbaric war that ever was fought in the history of men. All the inhumanities of heathen nations, pale before the nameless atrocities, the cold, cruel, calculating deviltries of Prussian warlords. They, with their own hands, with deliberate purpose of heart, opened the very mouth of hell to aid them in their murderous lust to establish the outward development of material power. Can this, I ask you, be anything less than an awful lesson to the whole world of the sin of materialism, when it is made the ideal of the people and the ruling thought of a nation?

The idolatry of the creature ever has been the besetting sin of man since the forbidden fruit seemed pleasant to the eyes of our first parents. In all time, it has been the master deceit of the evil one. The majesty of the will is the same today, as it was in Adam's day. God suffers us to walk in our own way; as the Psalmist says, He "gives us of our own desire." What we labor

for, we get; what seems to us of the most value, is the thing we attain. In other words, the thing we place on the throne of our hearts, is our god; and we cannot serve two gods. We must be false to one or the other.

But to one who believes in the spiritual world, and in the spiritual nature of man, must of necessity see the pre-eminence of "spiritual gifts," because, think as he may, act as he will, he must see and know, above all question, that the spiritual is the only thing that survives and really counts in human life. Whatever our temporal acquirement may be, it must, of necessity, be valueless except so far as it helps to establish our spiritual possessions. Because we know this, it goes without saying that the spiritual standard is the final standard, and by it we know in our hearts; we stand or fall.

We must never forget, however, that both the material and the spiritual are of the most intense importance, as they stand or fall together. Both are intended to be blessings to man; but only in one way,—when the material is made subservient to the spiritual, because the spiritual is the only permanent element in our nature. All else, as the apostle says, is "of the earth, earthy" and passes away while that which is spiritual remains to be our poverty or our fullness for evermore. Hence, when the apostle says, "concerning spiritual gifts brethren, I would not have you ignorant," he strikes a chord that must, sooner or later, vibrate in every human breast,—the one

thing that every man will at one time, most desire.

Here is the great duty, the great problem of life,—to keep the true balance between these ruling influences of our lives, giving each its own due importance, remembering always that there is nothing without its spiritual significance. This is because everything was created for spiritual ends; not only so, but is the embodiment of spiritual power. Since, therefore, the spiritual is the only thing that *is*, we see that everything we see, must be an outward expression of a spiritual power within it. Therefore, everything of earth, whether spiritual or material, must be quite sacramental. Its only purpose is to impart spiritual power in man, and build him up on the spiritual side of his nature.

We see, then, that the seen and the unseen belong to each other as the fruit belongs to the tree. The tree is necessary to the fruit-bearing, but except it bear fruit, it is as the barren fig tree, fit only for destruction. The final test is the spiritual test, "by their fruits ye shall know them." But the material, although transitory, is still of the most intense importance, because of its spiritual connections. "I am come that ye may have life," said the master. At the marriage in Cana of Galilee, He touched the material of water, and it became the gift of God to make glad the heart of the assembled guests. So today, by our union with Him, we are enabled to make the common element of our doing and our acting, a spiritual force in the world if we con-

secrete it to His service,—as work done consciously for Him.

Thus we see that the materialist and the religious observer may be both right and both wrong in that each may have grasped only a part of the truth. Each may view the age only from one angle, and only see one side of its marvellous development.

The great apostle who wrote our text was a wise and clear-sighted observer of his time. There were wide-mouthed materialists in his day as ours. He lived and moved amongst the men who sang of the wonders of Athens, of the glories of Greece and the might and grandeur of Rome. He saw, indeed, that they were “wholly given to idolatry,” as the materialists of today who glory in the visible achievements of our modern civilization. Athens was the last word in earthly development. She was the Acropolis of the world in architectural and mental power in St. Paul’s day, yet he did not lose sight of her dignity as such, nor ignore the primacy of her art and letters. On the contrary, he openly admitted and admired them; but he lifted them to their true sphere. He used them to prove that while they had gone far to demonstrate the divinity of man’s earthly powers, they did not go far enough to realize the full measure of his spiritual possibilities. The God whom they ignorantly worshipped he declared was a spiritual God of spiritual power, governing all things in Heaven and earth. He was wise enough to see

that there was nothing which had not its spiritual purpose and that the earthly was but the hand-maiden of the spiritual.

In his sublime argument on "the glory that shall be," he speaks in glowing terms of the glory of the temporal, the glory of the bursting seed, the glory of the sun and the moon and the stars; but he pointed out that while "the glory of the terrestrial was one, that the glory of the celestial was another." That is to say, each has a glory of its own, definite and admirable; but not complete in itself, in that one depended upon the other.

The apostle stated another truth that is indisputable and absolute, when he declared that that "was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural, and afterward that which was spiritual." In saying so, he put himself in line with the apostles of evolutionary science today, who tell us that "the completion of man's physical nature, has no meaning, if it be not to leave him free, at the termination of his physical development, to engage in the further work of employing his spiritual powers to achieve his spiritual and immortal destiny, as he climbs that steep ascent to Heaven, through peril, toil and pain."

We see, then, that man lives only as he grows spiritually. To be ignorant of spiritual gifts is his greatest calamity possible; it is the defeating of God's purpose for man; it is the blasting of his being; it is the losing of his soul.

We may say that this is the great subject that is

brought before us at this hour in the vast struggle of the ages between the flesh and the spirit. It is, in truth, Odin or Christ, Heaven or Hell. They are being weighed in the balances. "It is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes." But "He hath done great things, whereof we may rejoice"—for He has inspired millions of men to join His "noble army of Martyrs," and offer up their lives that His name may be glorified and truth remain upon the earth.

Yes, it has been reserved for the twentieth century to witness the most glorious spiritual object lesson that the world has ever seen in her later history. We have, indeed, been entertaining not angels, but heroes unawares. The courage, the loyalty, the endurance, the faithfulness unto death, not only of our own brave boys, but the rank and file of our noble allies, have been the wonder of the world. But we believe that our loss has been Heaven's gain, for we believe that unnumbered souls have received a martyr's crown, and if, as we are told, "the angels of God rejoice over one sinner that repents," how must they rejoice over that heroic band, that have given the surest sign of repentance by offering their lives for truth and righteousness. Such must receive the reward of which the Master spake of those who lay down their lives for their friends.

Thus, this war is showing the world a side of human nature, that despite its barbarity, is possessed of a spirit that is more than human.

It is more than the merely heroic, for it approaches the truly spiritual and sublime.

This tragedy of earth, this Calvary of the nations, has impressed the world with the fact, that the final test of civilization is in far other conditions than those which rest on mere force and material power. This shows us a truth, that it is well for us to remember, and that is, that men are often better than they seem; that a careless life often may hide the heart of a hero. The *Titanic* and *Lusitania* disasters show us that however much man is prone to luxury and selfishness, he can, and does, arise above the animal to the spiritual, when occasion demands the supreme sacrifice of giving his life for others.

These glorious, but ill-fated ships represented the last word in human skill, with regard to material safety and comfort and luxury of modern civilization. Yet they were as nothing in the face of the spiritual element that was seen in them, the heroism that was revealed by those who, face to face with death, gave their lives for others. It was then, they took their place among the Immortals. This is but another way of showing that amid all the glory of the terrestrial, over which we have the right to rejoice, there is still evidence to show that the glory of the celestial has not been blotted out by its bulk or brilliance, that the spiritual, the last and crowning evidence of the divine in man, is still his ideal, if not as yet the last full measure of his spiritual achievement.

So, we may take heart again concerning this

old earth-worn world, and believe that God is doing greatly for us, and that the nations of the world will arise from the grave of materialism to a new life in the spirit and be able to realize that "the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal."

XX

THE GLORY THAT SHALL BE

I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

ROM. VIII, 18

IN the Epistle from which our text is taken, we have a magnificent panorama placed before us for our instruction today, in that the fullness of God's creative work is made to pass under our vision, the visible and the invisible are placed side by side. Yes, the temporal and the eternal, are linked together by an inseparable bond which may not be broken. They, we are told, belong to each other, as the root belongs to the tree, as the bloom to the fruit,—parts of the one life, which together form the unity of God's purpose for man,—the "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves." The thing which is of the most vital importance to notice is, that the point to which the apostle bids us centre our vision, in the working out of this glorious purpose, is not anything which now *is*, but something that "shall be." The fulfillment of our work, the beauty and the glory of our accomplishment, the goal of our ambition never can be reached, he tells us, on earth; it is only in another estate that

we can attain the purpose for which we were made, and be partakers of the blessing for which God created us. This is the marked feature of this prophetic vision of the apostle. He saw every created thing waiting for something that was most surely coming, a constant looking forward to the glorious consummation of a divine work, a great spiritual accomplishment, which alone could fulfill the purpose of God in the creation of man. The apostle presses upon us this most important fact that the temporal is, at best, but a stepping stone to the eternal, and that it has no purpose whatever except it be done as a part of an eternal work which, in a state of glory, will attain the dignity and beauty of a completed work.

The apostle leaves nothing out in his summing up of things which he declares to be waiting in a state of anxious expectation. He shows us, that the earth and all things which it contains have their part in this earnest expectation of a glorified future. Through all its manifold changes of time and season which come to us in their fixed order, as well as its periods of unrest, its floods and its storms, its panics and its earthquakes, its wars and its tumults, its rise and fall of nations: all He shows us, are a part of an eternal plan. The good and the evil are made eventually to work out God's spiritual purpose for man; or, in the words of the apostle, "groan and travail together waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." So, too, of man—in the great as

well as the small circles of his activity—through all his labors and ambitions, his civil, social and domestic duties as father, citizen, statesman, or soldier; through all losses and crosses; through all his sufferings and afflictions and endurances of whatsoever nature: there runs through all the resistless stream of a Divine purpose, they are but means to an end,—the visible preparing the way to the invisible, the temporal leading to the eternal, even those good things which may not pass away.

May not this sublime vision of the apostle help to give us some light in the Egyptian darkness—I might say in the seeming eclipse—which has today fallen upon the world? A vast scene of blood rushes upon the sight, and we see the greater part of the whole Christian world engaged in a murderous strife of mutual destruction. Each tick of the clock marks the passing of unnumbered souls, and each setting sun tells of thousands that have offered the great sacrifice and have slept their last sleep. Were it not for the truth of the apostles' words, this would be the darkest day, the worst catastrophe the world ever has seen, and we might throw up our hands in despair and think that after the strife of two thousand years of Christian teaching, that at length evil had triumphed and the enemies of God's Church were holding dominion by land and sea.

But when we view these things in the light of our text, we see what we believe to be the most glorious triumph of the Christian faith that the

world ever has seen; for it is the Christian faith that is being most gloriously proved this day. She has accepted the challenge of her principles that was thrown down by a mighty nation, which practically had disowned God by giving world-wide publicity to the fact that she had forsaken the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. She had put her trust absolutely in things which are seen, her gospel was and is, that of might. The mailed fist was the symbol of her power, she owned no other. By this open pronouncement she has become the open enemy of God and of the Christian religion; for she set at naught the very things that formed its necessary characteristics. Instead of peace it would have war; instead of gentleness and love, it would have hatred and violence; instead of truth, it would have falsehood; instead of fidelity between nations would have broken treaties; instead of freedom and justice, it would have tyranny and bondage under the iron heel of war lords. Hence came this fearful crisis in the Christian world. Her very strongholds were threatened with destruction by the most powerful engines of war the world ever has seen. The great struggles which have marked the world's history in the past, were—so far as their powers of destruction were concerned—but as child's play to the crushing havoc of the vast armaments that Germany had been so long heaping together for this final testing of her brutal might, when she hoped to bring the world to her feet and, above all, desired

to make England and her Colonies bow the knee and show that those principles of truth and justice and liberty upon which they built their might and their glory as a people, were empty and vain. Thus it was that the Christian virtues of love and pity and sympathy were despised and trampled under foot and the spirit of the old war gods of might and revenge and lust and tyranny were put forth once more as demanding the highest thought of men.

So this great war was forced upon us and became the great challenge of the Christian nations which, thank God, they have most nobly accepted. They have met face to face this truce-breaking, insolent war lord, at once the enemy of civilization and of their common faith. Like a mighty giant arising from his slumber, the nations arose as one man. They forgot their local jealousies, their petty differences, their civil discord. They were stung to life not only by the open impiety but by the treacherous barbarity of Belgium's brutal invader. Belgium's loyal sons headed by their heroic King arose to defend their outraged homes and to her rescue came the chivalry of France with her old time dash and elan and summoned their hosts to arms. The old battle cry of freedom was heard in England, and the heart of the motherland was stirred to its depths. Her loyal children of many lands caught up the cry and hastened to the aid of the insulted mother. With a liberal hand they poured out their treasured gold. Their sons

came trooping o'er the seas, a mighty host, to stand side by side in the great slaughter-house of time, to fight for God and truth and justice and home and country, and maintain the rights and freedom of men and endeavor to wrench from the iron grasp the brutal might, that power that would enslave the world. Can we, then, for one moment doubt that the battle is the Lord's, when as of old the people willingly offered themselves for the avenging of Israel? Here surely is a true crusade, not indeed a host of fanatical adventurers of the eleventh or twelfth centuries, but a consecrated host of the twentieth century, a band of God's heroes fighting under the standard of the cross for the redemption of the Holy City, the Church of God on earth. Every morning paper tells us of their heroic deeds and that they loved not their lives unto the death. They have stood in the valley of death amid shot and shell, yet turned not back from the face of the enemy and offered their lives for the future welfare of their country. Such men never die, for they have won a crown that is everlasting, for they are partakers of the greater love on which the Master set His highest approval; nor shall their memory ever die so long as there are men to write our history. Yes, a noble monument will one day be raised to the memory of our blessed dead on the fields of Flanders, for those heroes who died for God and King and Country, for it was here that David, in spirit, met Goliath of Gath, the false, blustering, bragging bully of the world, to

his own dismay. Aye, my friends the honor roll of this great war will never be written on earth, but not one will be forgotten in the great book of God's remembrance, for "these are they which came out of great tribulation" and will surely receive the reward of their noble deeds.

Does not all this bring us back to our text? For such men do not in their hearts fight for things seen and temporal; but for spiritual ideals. It is not to crush the Kaiser only that they fight, but to crush from the minds of men, those spirits of evils that would enslave the world. He is already the embodiment of that spirit of tyranny and oppression which would rob us of our individual rights as free-born citizens and crush those spiritual qualities which mark us from the brute that perishes; the absence of which qualities make us slaves of earth and things seen and temporal. Anything we are called upon to give in the way of sacrifice—even of life itself—is worth the price we pay, in that it will help to preserve to us and to the world, the only thing which is of supreme importance,—the filling out of God's purpose in us and in the world.

"For the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be." In those glorious words "shall be" we find enfolded all the marvellous developments of which the Divine life of man is capable. For now, as the apostle says, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall

be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

Can we doubt, my friends, that when the apostle spake these inspired words that he had in his mind's eye, the vision of our text, and saw the whole created *universe of God working toward a great spiritual end*? This, indeed, was the sublime order at the first when at the creation God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life; the temporal led up to the spiritual. God's spirit first gave temporal light and life and then went on from glory to glory, rising higher and higher, step by step in a glorious march of developments, till he reached the great purpose of it all, man himself; then came the crown and completion of God's perfected work,—“the manifestation of the sons of God.” Man made in his own image, and had breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a *living soul*. Here was a divine epic written on the first page of man's history, showing man the end of all things, and the purpose of his life,—that it was an estate of glorious anticipation, a constant looking forward to a glory that shall be, that God who has begun His good work in us shall—if we are faithful—confirm it unto the end, “that man whom He has made in His image, might through spiritual development, grow more and more in His likeness, till he comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Till he wakes up in

His likeness and is satisfied. Ah, my friends, mark the words *is satisfied*, does this not speak of something that does not belong to earth? For when, I ask you, did the earth ever satisfy? From Adam's day to this, there has been a continued reaching out to something not attained, an unconscious looking forward to the enjoyment, not of a forbidden fruit of each, but to the glory that shall be.

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